

SOUTH AFRICA.

VOL. II.

SOUTH AFRICA.

BY
ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. II.

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THE TRANSVAAL.

foreign Republic, not very stable as was supposed, and assimilated in my mind with some of the South American Republics which so often change their name and their condition and in which the stanchest lovers of the Republican form of Government hardly put much faith. Now I was in the country and was not only assured myself as to its future security,—but was assured also of the assurance of all who were concerned. Whether Great Britain had done right or wrong to annex the Transvaal, every sod of its soil had instantly been made of double value to its proprietor by the deed which had been done.

Here I was in the Transvaal through which, at a period long since that of my own birth lions used to roam at will, and the tribes of the Swazies and Matabeles used to work their will against each other, unconscious of the coming of the white man. Now there are no lions in the land,—and, as far as I could see as I made my journey, very few Natives in the parts which had really been inhabited by the Dutch.

I cannot say that the hotels along the road were very good. By the ordinary travelling Englishman the accommodation would have been considered very bad;—but we did find places in which we could shelter ourselves, and beds of some kind were provided for us. A separate bedroom had become a luxury dear to the imagination and perpetuated by memory. We were a week on the road from Newcastle and pulled off our clothes but once,—when we were under the hospitable roof of Mrs. Swickhard, who keeps a store about half way at a place called Standers Drift. At one or two

places there were little Inns, always called hotels, and at others we were taken in by farmers or storekeepers. Sometimes the spot on which we were invited to lie down was so uninviting as to require the summoning up of a special courage. Twice I think we were called upon to occupy the same bed,—on which occasions my age preserved me from the hard ground on which my younger companion had to stretch himself. He had stories to tell of nocturnal visitors to which I have ever been inhospitable and useless,—the only wild beast that has ever attacked me being the musquito. Of musquitoes in the Transvaal I had no experience, and was told that even in summer they are not violent. We were travelling in September, which is equal in its circumstances, to our March at home. So much for our beds. On our route we banqueted at times like princes,—but these were the times in which we camped out in the veld,—the open field side,—and consumed our own provisions. Never was such tea made as we had. And yet the tea in all the houses was bad,—generally so bad as to be undrinkable. We had bought our tea, as other Colonists buy theirs, at Pieter Maritzburg, and I do not think that the grocer had done anything peculiar for us. But we were determined that the water should boil, that the proper number of tea-spoon-fulls should be afforded, and that the tea should have every chance. We certainly succeeded. And surely never was there such bacon fried, or such cold tongues extracted from tin pots. It happened more than once that we were forced by circumstances to breakfast at houses on the road,—but when we did so we always breakfasted again a few miles off by the side of some

spruit,—Anglice brook,—where our horses could get water and eat their forage.

The matter of forage is the main question for all travellers through these parts of South Africa. Let a man sleep where he may and eat what he will, he can go on. Let him sleep not at all and eat but little, he can have himself dragged to his destination. The will within him to reach a given place carries him safely through great hardships. But it is not so with your horse,—and is less so in the Transvaal than in any other country in which I have travelled. We soon learned that our chief care must be to provide proper food for our team, if we wished to reach Pretoria,—let alone those further towns, Kimberley and Bloemfontein. Now there are three modes in which a horse may be fed on such a journey. He may nibble the grass,—or cut his own bread and butter,—as horses do successfully in Australia; but if left to that resource he will soon cease to drag the vehicle after him in South Africa. Or he may be fed upon mealies. I hope my reader has already learned that maize or Indian corn is so called in South Africa. Mealies are easily carried, and are almost always to be purchased along the road. But horses fed upon them while at fast work become subject to sickness and die upon the journey. If used at all they should be steeped in water and dried, but even then they are pernicious except in small quantities. Forage is the only thing. Now forage consists of corn cut green, wheat or oats or barley,—dried with the grain in it and preserved in bundles, like hay. It is cumbrous to carry and it will frequently happen that it cannot be bought on the road side. But you must have

forage, or you will not get to your journey's end. We did manage to supply ourselves, sometimes carrying a large roll of it inside the cart as well as a sack filled with it outside. Every farmer grows a little of it through the country; and the storekeepers along the road, who buy it at 3d. a bundle sell it for a shilling or eighteen pence in accordance with their conscience. But yet we were always in alarm lest we should find ourselves without it. A horse requires about six bundles a day to be adequately fed for continual work. "Have you got forage?" was the first question always asked when the cart was stopped and one of us descended to enquire as to the accommodation that might be forthcoming.

We travelled something over thirty miles a day, always being careful not to allow the horses to remain at their work above two hours and a half at a time. Then we would "out-span,"—take the horses out from the carriage, knee-hobble them and turn them loose with their forage spread upon the ground. Then all our energies would be devoted to the tea kettle and the frying pan.

As we travelled most heartrending accounts reached us of the fate of my companions from Pieter Maritzburg to Newcastle, who had pursued their journey by the mail cart to Pretoria. This conveyance is not supposed absolutely to travel night and day;—nor does it go regularly by day and stop regularly by night in a Christian fashion, but makes its progress with such diminished periods of relaxation as the condition of the animals drawing it may create. If the roads and animals be good, four or six hours in the twenty-four may be allowed to the weary passengers;—

but if not,—if as at this time they both be very bad, the periods of relaxation are only those necessary for taking up the mail bags and catching the animals which are somewhere out on the veld, hobbled, and biding their time. For the mail cart the road was very bad indeed, while by our happy luck, for us it was very good. They travelled through two days and nights of uninterrupted rain by which the roads and rivers were at once made almost equally impassable; while for us, so quick are the changes effected, everything had become dry and at the same time free from dust. From place to place we heard of them,—how the three unfortunates had walked into one place fifteen miles in advance of the cart, wet through, carrying their shoes and stockings in their hands, and had then slept upon the ground till the vehicle had come up, the mules had been caught, and they had been carried on a mile or two when they had again been forced to walk. They were at this period two days late and had been travelling on these conditions for four days and four nights with the journey yet unfinished before them. Had I been one of them I think they would have been forced to leave me behind them on the way side. On the road we met their conveyance coming back. It had carried them to a certain point and had thence returned. It was a miserable box on wheels with two mules whose wretched bones seemed to come through their skin. They could not raise a trot though they had no load but the black driver, and I presume some mail bags.

Nor was any one to blame for all this,—except the late Government. For two years and a half the Contractor had done the work without receiving his pay. That he should

have gone on and done it at all is the marvel ;—but he had persevered spending all that he could make elsewhere upon the effort. When the annexation came he was paid his arrears in lump,—very much no doubt to his comfort ; but then there were new tenders and a new contract and it was hardly to be expected that he should lay out his happily recovered money in providing horses and conveyances for a month or two.

I was assured, and I believe truly, that this special journey,—which I did not take,—was the most unfortunate that has ever occurred on this unfortunate road. The animals had of course gone down the hill from bad to worse, and then had come the heavy rain. It seemed to be almost a direct Providence which had rescued me from its misery.

As I passed along the road I took every opportunity that came in my way of entering the houses of the Dutch. I had heard much of the manners of the Boers, and of their low condition of life. I had been told that they were altogether unprogressive,—that the Boer farmer of this day was as his father had been, that so had been the grandfather and the great grandfather, and that so was the son about to be ; that they were uneducated, dirty in their habits, ignorant of comforts, and parsimonious in the extreme. These are the main accusations brought against the Boers as a race, and they are supported by various allegations in detail ;—as that they do not send their children to school ; that large families live in two roomed houses, fathers mothers sons and daughters sleeping in one chamber ; that they never wash, and wear their clothes day and night without changing them ; that they will live upon the carcasses of wild beasts

and blesboks which they can shoot upon the lands so^c as to reduce their expenditure on food to a minimum;—that they are averse to neighbours, and that they will pay for no labour, thus leaving their large farms untilled and to a great extent unpastured. And added to all this it is said^c that the Boer is particularly averse to all change, resolving not only to do as his father has done before him, but also that his son shall do the like for the future.

The reader will probably perceive that these charges indicate an absence of that civilization which is produced in the world by the congregated intelligences of many persons. Had Shakespeare been born on a remote South African farm he would have been Shakespeare still; but he would not have worn a starched frill to his shirt. The Dutch Boer is what he is, not because he is Dutch or because he is a Boer, but because circumstances have isolated him. The Spaniards had probably reached as luxurious a mode of living as any European people when they achieved their American possessions, but I have no hesitation in saying that the Spaniards who now inhabit the ranches and remote farms of Costa Rica or Columbia are in a poorer condition of life than the Dutch Boers of the Transvaal. I have seen Germans located in certain unfortunate spots about the world who have been reduced lower in the order of humanity than any Dutchmen that I have beheld. And I have been within the houses of English Free Settlers in remote parts of Australia which have had quite as little to show in the way of comfort as any Boer's homestead.

Such comparisons are only useful as showing that distance

from crowded centres will produce the same falling off in civilization among one people as among another. The two points of interest in the matter are,—first the actual condition of these people who have now become British subjects, and secondly how far there is a prospect of improvement. I am now speaking of my journey from Natal up to Pretoria. When commencing that journey, though I had seen many Dutchmen in South Africa I had seen none of the Boer race; and I was told that those living near to the road would hardly be fair specimens of their kind. There was very little on the road to assist in civilizing them and that little had not existed long. From what I afterwards saw I am inclined to think that the impressions first made upon me were not incorrect.

The farmers' houses generally consisted of two main rooms, with probably some small excrescence which would serve some of the family as a sleeping apartment. In the living room there would be a fire-place, and outside the house, probably at thirty or forty yards' distance, there would be a huge oven built. The houses would never be floored, the uneven ground being sufficiently solid and also sufficiently clean for the Dutchman's purposes. There would seldom be a wall-paper or any internal painting of the woodwork. Two solid deal tables, with solid deal settees or benches,—not unfrequently with a locker under them,—would be the chief furniture. There might be a chair or two, but not more than one or two. There would always be a clock, and a not insufficient supply of cups, saucers, and basins. Knives, forks, and spoons would be there. The bed-

room of course would be a sanctum ; but my curiosity,—or diligence in the performance of the duty on which I was intent,—enables me to say that there is always a large bedstead, with a large feather bed, a counterpane, and apparently a pair of sheets. The traveller in Central America will see but little of such decencies among the Spanish farmers there.

Things in the Boer's house no doubt are generally dirty. An earthen floor will make everything dirty,—whether in Ireland or in the Transvaal. The Boer's dress is dirty,—and also, which is more important, that of the Boeress. The little Boerlings are all dirty ;—so that, even when they are pretty, one does not wish to kiss them. The Boers are very prolific, marrying early and living a wholesome, and I think, a moral life. They are much given to marrying, the widow or the widower very speedily taking another spouse, so that there will sometimes be three or four families in the one house. The women have children very early in life,—but then they have children very late also ; which seems to indicate that their manner of living is natural and healthy. I have heard them ridiculed for their speedy changes of marital affection, but it seems to me natural that a man or a woman living far apart from neighbours should require the comfort of a companion.

I am quite convinced that they are belied by the allegation which denies to them all progress in civilization. The continued increase in the number of British and German storekeepers in the country, who grow rich on their trade with the Boers, is sufficient of itself to tell one this. Twenty years since I am assured that it was a common thing for a

Boer to be clad in skins. Now they wear woollen clothing, with calico. I fancy that the traveller would have to travel very far before he found a skin-clad Boer. No doubt they are parsimonious;—it might perhaps be more fair to call them prone to save. I, personally, regard saving as a mistake, thinking that the improvement of the world generally is best furthered by a free use of the good things which are earned,—and that they who do not themselves earn them should, as a rule, not have them. It is a large question, which my readers would not thank me to discuss here. But there are two sides to it,—and the parsimony of the Boer who will eat up the carcase of a wild beast till it be rotten so that he need not kill a sheep, and may thus be enabled to stock a farm for his son, will have its admirers in Great Britain,—if not among fathers at any rate among sons. These people are not great consumers, as are our farmers. They wear their clothes longer, and stretch their means further; but that the Boer of to-day consumes very much more than his father there can be no doubt;—and as little that his sons and daughters will consume more.

As to their educational condition I found it very difficult to ascertain facts. The distance of these homesteads one from another makes school teaching in many instances impossible. In some cases I found that great efforts were made, the mother or perhaps the mother's sister teaching the children to read. Here and there I heard of boys and girls who were sent long distances,—at an expense not only for teaching but for boarding. It has, however, to be acknowledged that the education of the country is at present very

deficient. The country is now ours and when the first rudiments of stability have been fixed, so that laws may be administered and taxes collected, then I trust that the rulers of the Transvaal may find themselves able to do something towards bringing education nearer to the Boers.

I have heard the Boers spoken of as a dishonest people. I was once among certain tradesmen of the Transvaal who asserted that it was impossible to keep them from pilfering in the shops, one or two of them alleging that no Boer would make a considerable purchase without relieving the grief which was natural to him at parting with his money by pocketing some little article gratis,—a knife, or a tobacco pipe, or perhaps a few buttons. It was an accusation grievous to hear ;—but there arose in the company one man, also a dealer and an Englishman, who vindicated their character, alleging that in all parts of the world petty shoplifting was so common an offence that the shopkeeper was forced to take it into account in his calculations, and asserting that the thieving Boers, few though they might be in number, would leave more impression on the shopkeeping mind than the very many Boers who would come in and out without perpetrating any dishonesty. I have heard the Boers also charged with immorality,—which always means loose conduct among the women. I am inclined to think,—though I believe but few will share my opinion,—that social morality will always stand higher in towns, where people are close to each other and watch narrowly the conduct one of another, than in far-stretching pastoral districts, where there is no one to see what is done and to question a neigh-

Boer's conduct. I do not suppose that feminine delicacy can stand very high among the Boers of the Transvaal. • But on the other hand, as far as I could learn, illegitimacy is not common; and surely there never was a people more given to the honourable practice of matrimony.

I fear that the Boer families have but few recognised amusements. In the little towns or villages the people are given to dancing, and when they dance they are very merry; but the Boers do not live in the villages. The villages are but few in number over a country which is as large as Great Britain and Ireland put together, and the Boer's daughter who lives six or eight miles from her nearest neighbour can have but little dancing. The young people flirt together when they meet in the Transvaal as they do in all the parts of the world which I have visited. Their manner of flirting would probably be thought to be coarse by English mothers and daughters; but then,—if my readers will remember,—so was the manner of flirting ascribed to those most charming young ladies Rosalind and Celia. We can hardly be entitled to expect more refinement to-day among the Boers of South Africa than among the English of the time of Queen Elizabeth. They are very great at making love, or “frying” as they call it, and have their recognised forms for the operation. A most amusing and clever young lady whom I met on my way up to Pretoria was kind enough to describe to me at length the proper way to engage or to attempt to engage the affections of a Boer's daughter. The young Boer who thinks that he wants a wife and has made up his mind to look for one begins by riding round the

country to find the article that will suit him. On^o this occasion he does not trouble himself with the hard work of courtship, but merely sees what there is within the circle to which he extends his inspection. He will have dressed himself with more than ordinary care so that any impression which he may make may be favourable, and it is probable that the young ladies in the district know what he is about. But when he has made his choice, then he puts on his very best, and cleans his saddle or borrows a new one, and sticks a feather in his cap, and goes forth determined to carry his purpose. He takes with him a bottle of sugar plums,—an article in great favour among the Boers and to be purchased at every store,—with which to soften the heart of the mother, and a candle. Everything depends upon the candle. It should be of wax, or of some wax-like composition; but tallow will suffice if the proposed bride be not of very high standing. Arrived at the door he enters, and his purpose is known at once. The clean trowsers and the feather declare it; and the sugar plums which are immediately brought forth,—and always consumed,—leave not a shadow of doubt. Then the candle is at once offered to the young lady. If she refuse it, which my informant seemed to think was unusual, then the swain goes on without remonstrating and offers it to the next lady upon his list. If she take it, then the candle is lighted, and the mother retires, sticking a pin into the candle as an intimation that the young couple may remain together, explaining their feelings to each other, till the flame shall have come down to the pin. A little salt, I was assured, is often employed to make the flame weak and

so prolong the happy hour. But the mother, who has perhaps had occasion to use salt in her own time, may probably provide for this when arranging the distance for the pin. A day or two afterwards the couple are married,—so that there is nothing of the “nonsense” and occasional heartbreak of long engagements. It is thus that “freying” is carried on among the Boers of the Transvaal.

At home in England, what little is known about the Boers of South Africa,—or I might perhaps more correctly say what little has been told about them,—has tended to give a low notion of them as a race. And there is also an impression that the Boer and the English Colonist are very hostile to each other. I fear that the English Colonist does despise the Boer, but I have not found reason to think that any such hostility exists. Let an Englishman be where he may about the surface of the globe, he always thinks himself superior to other men around him. He eats more, drinks more, wears more clothes, and both earns and spends more money. He,—and the American who in this respect is the same as an Englishman,—always consume the wheat while others put up with the rye. He feeds on fresh meat, while dried or salt flesh is sufficient for his neighbours. He expects to be “boss,” while others work under him. This is essentially so in South Africa where he is constantly brought into contact with the Dutchman,—and this feeling of ascendancy naturally produces something akin to contempt. There is no English farmer in South Africa, who would not feel himself to be vilified by being put on a par with a Dutch farmer. When an Englishman marries a Boer’s daughter, the con-

nexion is spoken of almost as a *mésalliance*. "He made a mistake and married a Dutchwoman," I have heard more than once. But, nevertheless, the feeling does not amount to hostility. The Boer in a tacit way acknowledges his own inferiority, and is conscious that the Briton is strong enough and honest enough to do him some service by his proximity.

The man whom the Dutch Boer does hate is the Hollander, and he is the man who does in truth despise the Boer. In the Transvaal a Hollander is the immigrant who has come out new from Holland, whereas the Dutchman is the descendant of those who came out two centuries since. The Dutchman is always an *Africander*, or one who has been born in Africa from white parents, and he has no sympathy whatever, no feeling of common country, with the new comer from the old country of his forefathers. The Hollander who thus emigrates is probably a man of no family, whereas the old Colonist can go back with his pedigree at least for two centuries and who thinks very much of his ancestors. The Hollander is educated and is said to be pedantic and priggish before those who speak his own language. And in the matter of language these new Dutchmen or Hollanders complain much of the bad Dutch they hear in the Colony and give great offence by such complaints.

The Boers are at present much abused for cowardice, and stories without end are current in the country as to the manner in which they have allowed themselves to be scared by the smallest opposition. You will be told how a posse of twenty men sent to arrest some rebel turned and fled wildly when the rebel drew forth from his breast and presented to

them a bottle of soda-water ;—how they have got one Kafir to fight another on their behalf and how they have turned and run when it has been expected that they should support the Kafir and do some fighting on their own behalf. I fear that of late there has been truth in these stories and that the pluck shewn by them when they made good their hold upon the country, has been greatly dimmed by the quiet uneventful tenor of their present lives. But no one complains so bitterly of the cowardice of the Boers as the Hollander fresh from Holland. I once ventured to take the part of the Boers in a discussion on the subject, and referred back to the courage of Retief, of Potgeiter, and of Maritz. There was a gentleman from Holland in the company, and I own that I thought that politeness required me to make some defence of his Dutch brethren in his hearing. But I found myself to be altogether in the wrong. “They are the vilest set of worthless cowards that the world has ever produced,” said the Dutchman angrily. I think I may say that there is no sympathy whatsoever between the old Dutch Colonist, and the newly-arrived immigrant from Holland.

We crossed the Vaal river at a place called Standerton or Ständer's Drift,—drift being Dutch for a ford the word has by common usage become English in South Africa,—as also has the word spruit for a stream. Here there resides one General Standers from whom the place is called, an old man who commanded a party of the Dutch at the battle of Boom Platz, which was fought between the Boers and the British at a place so called in the Orange Free State in 1848. If

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the stories told by the English be true the Boers did not distinguish themselves by courage on the occasion. The General is a fine old man, as upright as a maypole and apparently as strong as an oak, about 80 years of age. He is now a most loyal subject of the British throne, though there have been days in his career in which the British name has not been very dear to him. He was finely courteous to us, and asked us to drink coffee, as do all Boers when they intend to be civil to their visitors. It should be understood by travellers that their courtesy is very superior to their coffee. No allusion is here made to the General's establishment as we had not time to partake of his hospitality. At Standerton we found coal burnt, which had been dug about 30 miles from the place. It was good coal, burning clearly and without much ash.

Rising up from the Vaal river to the height of about 500 feet the land ceases to be hilly and becomes a vast rolling plain for many miles, without a single tree, and almost without a single enclosure. We saw numerous herds of deer, the large blesbok and the smaller springbok, which were near enough to be reached by a rifle. They would stand at about 400 yards from us and gaze at us. My friend had a smooth-bore gun with large shot; but could not get near enough to them to make such a weapon available. The country was very uninteresting,—but capable of bearing wheat on almost every acre. Wheat however there was none, and only here and there at very long distances a batch of arable ground tilled for the purpose of growing forage. I have said that there were but few enclosures.

Enclosures for arable or even pastoral purposes there were none. Perhaps three or four times in a day a Boer's farm would be seen from the road side, distinguished by a small group of trees, generally weeping willows. This would look like a very small oasis in a huge desert. Round the house or on one side of it there would be from six to a dozen acres of land ploughed, with probably a small orchard and sometimes an attempt at a kitchen garden. There would too be some ditching and draining and perhaps some slight arrangement for irrigation. The Boer's farm-house I have already described. When questioned the farmer invariably declared that it would not pay him to extend his agriculture, as he had no labour on which to depend and no market to which he could carry his wheat. Questions on such subjects were always answered with the greatest courtesy, and I may almost say with eagerness. I do not remember that I ever entered a Boer's house in which he did not seem glad to see me.

A farm in the Transvaal is supposed to contain six thousand acres. This is so much a matter of course that when a man holds less he describes himself as possessing half a farm, or a quarter of a farm. The land is all private property,—or nearly so, very little of it remaining in the hands of the Government on behalf of the people generally,—and having been divided into these large sections, cannot now be split up into smaller sections except by sale or inheritance. The consequence has been and still is very prejudicial to the interests of the country. The farms are much too large for profitable occupation, and the farmers by the very extent of

their own dominions are kept without the advantages of neighbourhood. The people are isolated in regard to schools, churches, and all the amenities of social life. They cannot assist each other in the employment of labour, or create markets for the produce of one another by their mutual wants. The boorishness of the Boer is attributable in a great degree to the number of acres of which he is the lord.

As we went along the road we met a detachment of the 13th regiment marching back from Pretoria to Newcastle. There seemed to be going on a great moving of troops hither and thither, which no doubt had been made necessary by the annexation. And these marchings were never made without accidents of flood and field. On this occasion sixteen waggon-oxen had died on the road. The soldiers had to carry their tents and belongings with them, and the ballocks therefore were essential to these movements. When I saw the big waggons, and the dead oxen, and remembered that every man there in a red coat had been extracted from our population at home with the greatest difficulty, and brought to that spot at an enormous cost, and that this had been done for no British purpose, I own that I asked myself some questions as to the propriety of our position in the Transvaal which I found it difficult to answer ;—as for instance whether it is necessary that the troubles of the world at large should be composed and set to rights by the soldiers of a nation so very little able to provide an army as Great Britain. But the severity of these thoughts was much mitigated when the two officers in command walked across to us while we were outspanning in the veld, and offered us bitter beer. The

Transvaal would never have known even the taste of bitter Beer had it not been for the British army. Talk of a fountain in the desert! What fountain can be compared to that kettle full of Bass which the orderly who followed our two new friends carried in his hand. "Do not look at it," said the donor as the beverage was poured out. "The joltings of the journey have marred its brightness. But you will find that the flavour is all there."

The only place on the road worthy to be called a town is Heidelberg and this does not contain above two or three hundred inhabitants. It is the capital of a district of the same name of which the entire population is about 2,000. The district is larger than an ordinary English county, comprising a compact area about 80 miles long by 60 broad, and yet it is returned as having no other village within its boundaries except the so called town of Heidelberg. But the place has an air of prosperity about it and contains two or three mercantile firms which are really doing a large business. In these places the shops, or stores, are very much more extensive than would be any such depôts in English villages of the same size;—so much so that comfortable fortunes may be made in a comparatively short time. As the Boers are the chief customers, it is evident that they are learning to spend their money, and are gradually departing from the old Boer law that the farm should supply everything needed for life.

At Heidelberg we found a good Inn,—a good Inn that is for the Transvaal:—but the landlord at once told us that he had got no forage. Our first work therefore was to go about

into the town and beg. This we did successfully, a merchant of the place consenting to let us have enough for our immediate requirements, out of his private store. But for this we must have used the reserve supply we carried with us, and have gone on upon our road to look for more.

The Inn I have said was good. There was a large room in which a public table was kept and at which a very good dinner was provided at half-past six, and a very good breakfast at eight the next morning. There was a pretty little sitting room within which any lady might make herself comfortable. The bed and bedroom were clean and sweet. But there was only one bed tendered for the use of two of us, and a slight feeling seemed to exist that we were fastidious in requiring more. As more was not forthcoming my unfortunate companion had to lie upon the ground.

At Heidelberg we were nearly on the highest table ground of the Transvaal. From thence there is a descent to Pretoria, —not great indeed for Pretoria is 4,450 feet above the sea,—but sufficient to produce an entire change of climate. On the High Veld, as it is called, the characteristics of the country are all those belonging to the temperate zone,—such, indeed, as are the characteristics of our own country at home. Wheat will grow if planted in the late autumn and will ripen in the summer. But as the hill is turned, down to Pretoria, tropical influences begin to prevail. Apples are said to thrive well, but so also do oranges. And wheat will not live through the droughts of the winter without irrigation. Irrigation for wheat must be costly, and consequently but little wheat is grown. Wheat sown in the spring is, I am

told, subject to rust. Mealies, or Indian corn, will thrive here, and almost all kinds of fruit. The gardens produce all kinds of vegetables, when irrigation is used.

We descended into Pretoria through a "poort" or opening between the hills and the little town with its many trees smiled upon us in the sun. It lies in a valley on a high plateau, just as Grahamstown does, and is surrounded by low hills. As we were driven into the town I congratulated myself on having come to the end of my journey. To reach Pretoria had been my purpose, and now I was at Pretoria. My further troubles would be confined to my journey home which I intended to commence after a week's delay at the capital of our new Colony. Hitherto my work had been not very uncomfortable and certainly not unprosperous.

CHAPTER II.

THE TRANSVAAL.—ITS HISTORY.

THE Transvaal as its name plainly indicates is the district lying north or beyond the Vaal river. The Orange river as it runs down to the sea from the Diamond Fields through the inhospitable and little known regions of Bushmansland and Namaqualand used to be called the Gariep and is made up of two large rivers which, above their junction, were known as the Gariep Kye and the Knu Gariep,—the tawny and the orange coloured. The former which is the larger of the two is now known as the Vaal, and the latter as the Orange. The Vaal rises in the Drakenberg mountains and is the northern border of the Orange Free State or Republic. The country therefore beyond that river received its present name very naturally.

This southern boundary of the Transvaal has always been marked clearly enough, but on every other side there are and have been doubts and claims which are great difficulties to the administrator of the new Colony. To the west are the Zulus who are, at this moment, claiming lands which we also claim. Then above them, to the north-west are the Portuguese who are not perhaps likely to extend their demands for inland territory, but who are probably quite as

much in doubt as we are as to any defined boundary between them and the natives.* To the north I think I may say that no one yet knows how far the Transvaal goes. The maps give the Limpopo river as a boundary, but I think Sir Theophilus Shepstone will own that Great Britain cannot, should she wish to do so, make good her claim to lordship over the native races up to the Limpopo without a considerable amount of——arrangement with the tribes. And yet the matter is one that must be settled with accuracy because of the hut tax. From the natives living under the protection of the British Crown in the other colonies of South Africa a direct tax is levied,—10s. or 14s.,—on each hut occupied, and it is indispensable to the Government of the new Colony that the same system shall be introduced there. We cannot govern the country without a revenue, and from our black subjects this is the only means of collecting a revenue,—till we begin to make something out of their taste for strong drinks. It was inaccuracy as to their northern and north-eastern boundaries which brought the South African or Transvaal Republic to that ruin which induced us to seize it;—or, in other words, the lands which the Dutch claimed the natives claimed also, and these claims were so ambiguous, so progressive, so indefinite, that to have yielded to them would have been to give up the whole country. Sicocoeni who was the Chief most specially hostile to the

* In 1864 by a treaty between the Portuguese and the Republic the Loboabo range of mountains was agreed upon as a boundary between them; but I am not aware that the natives living to the east of these mountains were ever made a party to this treaty.

Republic in its last days claimed even the site on which stood Pretoria the capital, where the Volksraad or Parliament of the Republic sat. In dealing with the Natives as to boundaries nothing can be got by yielding. Nor does it seem possible to trust to abstract justice. Between Sicocoeni and Mr. Burgers, the last President of the Republic, it would have been impossible for abstract justice to have drawn a true line so confused had the matter become. It can only be done by a strong hand, and can only be done well by a strong hand guided by a desire equally strong to do what is right. As an Englishman I feel sure that we shall have the one, and, again as Englishman, I trust that we shall have the other. The habitations of hundreds of thousands of Natives are concerned. I find that the coloured population of our new Colony is variously stated at numbers ranging from 250,000 to 800,000. It is all guess work;—but there is no doubt that the multitude of human beings concerned is very great. Were we to annex everything included in the Dutch maps of the Transvaal, the true number would probably be much greater than the larger of those above given. You, my readers, probably think that the more we include the better for them, even though they should be made to pay a tax of 10s. a hut. So do I. But they don't. They want to be independent,—as are the Zulus down on the sea coast. It is therefore impossible not to perceive a difficulty. A line to the North and North-East must be drawn;—but no possible line will satisfy the natives. To the West and North-West the matter is probably as doubtful, though not as difficult. The numbers are fewer and the people less war-

like. But to the South-West there is another problem to be solved. There is a territory North by West of the Vaal river, including the little town of Bloombhof, which we, by British award declared to be independent. Governor Keate of Natal was appointed as arbitrator to draw a line between the Republic and the natives, and he declared this territory to be a portion of Bechuanaland. But the Transvaal, rejecting Governor Keate's award, took the territory and governed it. Are we now to reject it and give it back to the Bechuanas, or are we to keep it as part of the annexed Colony? This also will add something to the difficulty of defining our new possession.

The history of the European occupation of the Transvaal is the same as the history of all South Africa during this century. The Dutch have been ever running away from the English, and the English have sometimes pursued them and sometimes determined that they should go whither they would and be no longer accounted as British subjects. They have certainly been a most stiff-necked people with whom to deal,—and we by their inability to amalgamate with ourselves have been driven into vacillations which have not always been very creditable to our good sense. We have been too masterful and yet not masterful enough. In Natal as we have seen, we would not allow them to form a Republic or to throw off their British allegiance. Across the Orange river we have fought them and reduced them,—at Boom Plaats, as I shall describe when giving the little history of the Orange Free State,—and then have bid them go their own way and shift for themselves.

The Dutch of South Africa have hated our ways, though I do not think that they have hated us. What they have practically said to us is as follows. "No doubt you are very fine fellows, and very strong. We do not intend to pit ourselves against you. We first took and cultivated and civilized this Cape Colony. But as you want it in God's name take it and use it, and do with it as you list. ~~But~~ let us go and do as we list elsewhere. You don't like slavery. We do. Let us go and have our slaves in a new land. We must encounter endless troubles and probably death in the attempt. But anything will be better to us than your laws and your philanthropy." We could not hinder them from going. There was at one time a desire to hinder them, and the Colonial Attorney General in 1836 was consulted as to the law on the subject. There was an old Dutch law, he said, forbidding the Colonists to cross the border; but that could hardly be brought in force to prevent persons from seeking their fortunes in other lands. We have already seen in regard to Natal, how Lieut.-Governor Stockenstrom, when appealed to, declared that he knew of no law which prevented His Majesty's subjects from leaving His Majesty's dominions and settling elsewhere. That these people must be allowed to go away with their waggons wheresoever they might choose, was evident enough; but the British rulers could not quite make up their minds whether it was or was not their duty to go after the wanderers.

When the Dutch first made their way into the country now called the Transvaal they were simply on their road to Natal. News had reached them of the good land of Natal

and they endeavoured to get to it by going northwards across the Orange river. While pursuing their way through what is now the Free State they encountered a terrible savage named Mazulekatze, who was at the head of a tribe called the Matabele, with whom they had to fight to the death. This warrior was a Zulu and had fought under Chaka the king of the Zulus;—but had quarrelled with his lord and master and fled out of Zulu Land westwards. Here he seems to have created the tribe called Matabele, some of whom were Zulus and some natives and some warriors who had joined him, as being a great fighting Chief, from other tribes. He was as terrible a savage as Chaka himself, and altogether “ate up” the less warlike Bechuanas who up to his time possessed the land thereabouts. This seems to have been the way with these tribes. They were like water running furiously in a torrent which in its course is dashed over a rock. The stream is scattered into infinite spray the particles of which can hardly be distinguished from the air. But it falls again and is collected into this stream or the other, changing not its nature but only its name. The Zulus, the Bechuanas, the Matabeles, and the Kafirs seem to have been formed and reformed after this fashion without any long dated tribal consistency among them. When the Dutch came to the Vaal river, groping their way to Natal, they found Mazulekatze and his Matabeles who was still at war with some of these Bechuana tribes south of the Vaal river. This was in 1837, the year before the final abolition of slavery which by the law of 1834 was arranged to take place in 1838. The Dutch were nearly exterminated, but they succeeded in

driving Mazulekatze out of the land. Then there was a quarrel among themselves whether they should remain in that land or go eastward to the more promising soil of Natal. They went eastward, and how they fared in Natal has already been told.

For ten or eleven years after this the "trekking" of the Dutchmen into the Transvaal was only the onward movement of the most hardy of the class, the advanced pioneers of freedom, who would prefer to live on equal terms with the Savage,—if that were necessary,—than to have any dealings with English law. These were men at that time subject to no rule. Some were established north and west of the Vaal where Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp now are; others south and east of the Vaal. As to the latter there came an order for the appointment over them of British magistrates from Sir Henry Smith who was then the Governor of the Cape Colony. This was an offence which could not be borne. Andreas Pretorius, that most uncompromising, most stiff-necked and self-reliant of all the Dutchmen, had left Natal in disgust with this Governor and had settled himself in these parts. He instigated a rebellion against British authority,—not with the view of at that moment claiming land north of the Vaal, but of asserting the independence of those who lived to the south of it. Then came the battle of Boom Plaats and the Orange Sovereignty,—as will be told in the section of my Work devoted to the history of the Orange Free State. It was when flying from this battle, in 1848, that Pretorius crossed the Vaal. "For you there is safety," he said to his companions as he started. "For me there is

none." Then he fled away across the river and a reward of £2,000 was set upon his head. This I think may be regarded as the beginning of the occupation of the Transvaal territory by a European or Dutch population.

A sort of Republic was at once established of which Pretorius was at first the acknowledged rather than the elected Chief. The most perfect freedom for the white man,—which was supposed to include perfect equality,—was to be maintained by a union of their forces against the Natives of the country. Mazulekatze had been ejected, and the Bechuanas were again coming in upon their old land. Then there were new troubles which seemed always to end in the subjection of a certain number of the Natives to the domestic institutions of the Dutch. The children of those who rebelled, and who were taken as prisoners, were bound as apprentices in the families of the Dutch farmers,—and as such were used as slaves. There can be no doubt that such was the case. All the evidence that there is on the subject goes to prove it, and the practice was one entirely in accordance with Dutch sympathies and Dutch manners. It is often pointed out to an enquirer that the position of the little urchins who were thus brought into contact with civilization was thereby much improved. Such an argument cannot be accepted as worth anything until the person using it is brought to admit that the child so apprenticed is a slave, and the master a slave-owner. Then the argument is brought back to the great question whether slavery as an institution is beneficial or the reverse. But even a Dutchman will generally avoid that position.

Such was the condition of the territory when the English determined that they would signify to their runaway subjects that they were regarded as free to manage themselves as they pleased across the Vaal. Of what use could it be to follow these Dutchmen beyond that distant river, when, if so persecuted, they would certainly “trek” beyond the Limpopo? Further back than the Limpopo were the Zambesi and the Equator. And yet as matters then stood a certain unpronounced claim was implied by what had been done between the Orange and the Vaal. A treaty was therefore made with the people in 1852, and for the making of the treaty Messrs. Hogge and Owen were despatched as Her Majesty’s Commissioners to meet Pretorius and a deputation of emigrant farmers, to settle the terms on which the Republic should be established. There were two clauses of special interest. One prohibited slavery in the new Republic,—a clause so easy to put into a treaty, but one of which it is so impossible for an outside power to exact the fulfilment! Another declared that the British would make no alliances with the natives north of the Vaal river,—a clause which we have also found to be very inconvenient. It would have been better perhaps merely to have told these Boers that if we found slavery to exist we should make it a *casus belli*, and to have bound ourselves to nothing. This would have been “high-handed,”—but then how much more high-handed have we been since? -

Andreas Pretorius was the first President of the now established and recognised nationality which, with a weak ambition which has assisted much in bringing it to its ruin, soon called itself the South African Republic,—as though it

were destined to swallow up not only the Free State but the British Colonies also. In this, however, Andreas Pretorius himself had no part. The passion of his soul seems to have been separation from the British ;—not dominion over them. He died within two years, in July 1853, and his son was elected in his place. The father was certainly a remarkable man,—the one who of all his class was the most determined to liberate himself from the thralldom of English opinions. Mr. Theal in his history* of South Africa well describes how this man had become what he was by a continued reading of the Old Testament. The sanguinary orders given to the chosen people of the Lord were to him orders which he was bound to obey as were they. Mr. Theal quotes a special passage from the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy, to which I will refer my reader—"When thou comest nigh unto a city fight against it." The Israelites are enjoined either to slay or to enslave. And Pretorius felt that such were the commands given to him in reference to those natives among whom his lot had cast him. They were to him the people of the cities which were "very far off," and whom he had divine order to enslave, while the more unfortunate ones who would still fain occupy the lands on which it suited him and his people to dwell, were "the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites" whom the Lord had commanded him utterly to destroy. With such authority before him, and while black labour was so necessary to the cultivation of the land, how could he doubt about slavery? In studying the peculiarity

* Vol. ii. p. 164.

of the Dutch character in South Africa and the aversion of the people to our ways we have always to remember that they had been brought up for ages in the strictest belief in the letter of scripture. The very pictures in their bibles were to them true pictures, because they were there. It was so two hundred years ago with a large sect in Europe,—from which sect they had sprung. They had grown in the new land without admixture with the progressing ideas of Europe. They had neither been enlightened nor contaminated by new systems of belief, or unbelief. So it has come to pass that an institution which is so abhorrent to us as to make us feel that the man who is stained by it must be a godless sinner, is still to them a condition of things directly authorized and ordered by the Almighty. By our persistency, by our treaties, by our power, by enforcing upon their inferior condition as the very trade-mark of our superiority the command that slavery shall exist no longer, we have driven them to deny it, and have almost convinced them that slavery is no longer possible. But that heartfelt hatred of slavery which is now common to all of us in England has not yet reached the Dutchman of South Africa,—and is hardly as strong in the bosoms of all British South African Colonists as it might be.

After the death of the elder Pretorius the Republic had by no means a quiet or a bloodless time. The capital was then at Potchefstroom, near the Vaal, while the enormous territory claimed by it to the north was almost without government. There are stories of terrible massacres amidst the records of the Republic,—of fearful revenge inflicted on

the white men by the Savage whose lands had been taken from him, and of tenfold, hundredfold revenge following quick upon the heads of the wretched people. "Thou shalt utterly destroy them!" And therefore a whole tribe was smothered and starved to death within the caves in which they had taken refuge. We read that, "For years afterwards the supremacy of the white man was unquestioned in that part of the Transvaal, and we can easily believe it." But for some years the Republic hardly had any other history but that of its contests with the Natives and its efforts to extend its borders by taking land wherever its scanty European population could extend itself. The cities "very far off" were all their legitimate prey. As the people thus followed out their destiny at great distances the seat of Government was moved from Potchefstroom to Pretoria, which city was named after the founder of the Republic.

Upon the death of Andreas Pretorius in 1853 his son became President; but in 1859 he was elected President of the Free State in the room of Mr. Bostrof, who had then retired. When at Bloemfontein he advocated measures for joining the two Republics under the name of the South African Republic. Already had risen the idea that the Dutch might oust the English from the continent, not by force of arms but by Republican sentiment,—an idea however which has never travelled beyond the brains of a few political leaders in the Transvaal. I do not think that a trace of it is to be found in the elder Pretorius. Mr. Burgers, the last President, of whom I shall have to

* "South Africa," by John Noble, p. 173 B.

speaking presently, was so inflated by it, that it may be said to have governed all his actions. The idea is grand, for a South African Dutchman patriotic, and for a Republican Dutchman not unnatural. But such ideas must depend on their success for their vindication. When unsuccessful they seem to have been foolish thoughts, bags of gas and wind, and are held to be proof of the incompetency of the men who held them for any useful public action. Neither will Mr. Pretorius junior nor Mr. Burgers ever be regarded as benefactors of their country or as great statesmen; but the bosoms of each have no doubt swelled with the aspiration of being called the Dutch Washington of South Africa. I think I may say that Mr. Brand, who is now President of the Orange Free State, is imbued with no such vaulting ambition, whatever may be his ideas on the course of things in the womb of time. He is mildly contented to be President of the Free State, and as long as the Free State has a history to be written he will be spoken of as the man who in the midst of its difficulties made its existence possible and permanent.

The Volksraad of the Free State did not sympathise with the views of their President from the Transvaal, and in 1863 he resigned the place. He was soon re-elected President of the Northern Republic and remained in that office till he quarrelled with his own Volksraad or was quarrelled with by them. He struggled hard and successfully to extend the bounds of the Empire, and claimed among other lands that tract of land of which I have already spoken, which is far to the south-west of the Transvaal, but still to the north

or north-west of the Vaal, where a tribe of the Griquas, a branch of the vast tribe of the Bechuanas, were living. The question of a boundary in that direction was submitted to Governor Keate as umpire, and his decision, which was hostile to the claims of the Republic, was accepted by the President. But the Volksraad repudiated their President, declaring that he had acted without their authority, and refused to surrender the land in question. Oddly enough after this, it is,—or it is not,—at this moment a portion of British territory. I do not know with what face we can hold it;—but still I feel sure that we shall not abandon it. Pretorius was so disgusted with his Volksraad that he resigned his office. This happened in 1872. Mr. Burgers, the late President, was then elected for a term of five years, and was sworn into office on 1st July of that year.

Mr. Burgers, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Capetown, is still a man in the prime of life and is entitled to be spoken of with that courtesy which always should be extended to living politicians who have retired from office. Unless the proof to the contrary be so apparent as to be glaring,—as to be impossible of refutation,—the motives of such men should not be impugned. When a man has held high office in his State,—especially when he has been elected to that office by the voices of his fellow-citizens,—he is entitled to the merit of patriotism unless the crime of selfish ambition or unclean hands have been brought home against him by the voices which elected him. No such charges have been substantiated against Mr. Burgers, and I shall therefore speak of him with all the respect which patriotism

deserves. He was chosen because he was supposed to be fit, and I have no reason to doubt that he strove to do his best for his adopted country. But the capacity of a Statesman for the office he has filled is always open to remark, whether he be still in power or shall have retired. In the former case it is essential to oust an incompetent man from his place, and in the latter to defend the course by which such a one has been ousted. As a public man,—one who devotes himself to the service of the people,—is entitled to the most generous construction of his motives, which should be regarded as pure and honest till their impurity and dishonesty shall have been put beyond question,—so is he justly exposed to all that criticism can say as to the wisdom of his words and deeds. The work on which he is employed is too important for that good-natured reticence with which the laches of the insignificant may be allowed to be shrouded.

When Mr. Burgers was elected President of the Transvaal Republic he was, or shortly before had been, a clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape Colony, who had differed on matters of creed with the Church to which he belonged, and had consequently cast off his orders. He was known as an eloquent enthusiastic man, and was warmly welcomed in the Transvaal,—where, if ever, a silent, patient, unobtrusive officer was wanted for the work which had to be done in consolidating the Republic. The country at the time was very poor. The Treasury was empty,—a paper currency had been set afloat in 1865, and was of course greatly depreciated. Taxes were with difficulty collected, and the quarrels with the natives were incessant. Mr.

Burgers succeeded in raising a loan, and borrowed £60,000, which the bank who lent the money will now receive from the pockets of tax-payers in England. A considerable portion of this sum has, I believe, already been repaid out of money voted by the House of Commons. He established a national flag,—which was we may suppose a cheap triumph. He had a gold coinage struck, with a portraiture of himself,—two or three hundred gold pieces worth 20s. each,—which I will not hurt his feelings by calling sovereigns. This could not have cost much as the coinage was so limited. They were too all made out of Transvaal gold. He set on foot a most high flown scheme of education,—of which the details will be given elsewhere and which might not have been amiss had it not been utterly impracticable. He attempted to have the public lands surveyed, while he did not in the least know what the public lands were and had no idea of their limits. There was to be a new code of laws, before as yet he had judges or courts. And then he resolved that a railway should at once be made from Pretoria through the gold fields of the Transvaal down to Delagoa Bay where the Portuguese have their settlement. For the sake of raising a loan for this purpose he went in person to Holland,—just when one would have thought his presence in his own country to be indispensable, and did succeed in saddling the Republic with a debt of £100,000 for railway properties,—which debt must now, also, be paid by the British tax-payers. To all this he added,—so runs the rumour among those who were his friends in the Republic—many proud but too loudly spoken

aspirations as to the future general destiny of the South African Republic. His mind seems to have been filled with the idea of competing with Washington for public admiration.

In all this there was much for which only the statesman and not the man must be blamed. The aspirations in themselves were noble and showed that Mr. Burgers had so far studied his subject as to know what things were good for a nation. But he had none of that method which should have taught him what things to put first in bestowing the blessings of government upon a people. We remember how Goldsmith ridicules the idea of sending venison to a man who is still without the necessaries of life.

“It’s like sending them ruffles when wanting a shirt.”

It was certainly a shirt, and other of the simplest of garments, which the people of the Transvaal then wanted;—the ordinary calico shirt of taxation and the knee-breeches of security for property;—while Mr. Burgers was bestowing ruffles upon them in the shape of a national flag and a national gold coinage with his own portrait. Education is certainly one of the first wants of a people, but education will not be assisted at all by a law declaring that all schoolmasters shall have ample incomes, unless there be funds from which such incomes may be paid. What is so excellent as a good code of laws;—unless indeed it be some means of enforcing them, without which the best code in the world must be ineffective? A code of laws is to be had with comparatively little difficulty,—almost as easily as the flag. There are so many that an aspiring President need only

hooose. But that regular system of obedience to the laws which has to found itself on a well-collected Revenue, and which is the very essence of government, should come first, and in such a country as that which Mr. Burgers was called upon to govern, the establishment of this system should have been the care of the Governor before he had thought of a new code. Mr. Burgers rushed at once to the fruition of all the good things which a country can possess without stopping to see whether they were there, to be enjoyed. Such was his temperament. Nothing more plainly declares the excessive wealth of France and of England than the plenty of their gold coinage;—therefore certainly let us have some gold pieces in the Transvaal. How proud are the citizens of the United States of their Stars and Stripes! Therefore let us have a flag. How grand is the education of Prussia! Therefore let us have schools every where!

I myself think that the measure most essential for the development of the resources of the Transvaal is a railway to Delagoa Bay. I cannot therefore quarrel with Mr. Burgers for holding the same opinion. But it was characteristic of the enthusiasm of the man that he, leaving his country in uttermost confusion, should himself rush off to Europe for a loan,—characteristic of his energy that he should be able to raise, if not a large sum of money, railway plant representing a large sum—and characteristic of his imprudence that all this should have been done without any good result whatever. A railway to a country is a great luxury, the most comfortable perhaps that it can enjoy; but Mr. Burgers does not seem to have understood that a nation like a man,

should be able to provide for itself the necessities of life before it looks for luxuries.

As in this I am accusing Mr. Burgers, so also am I defending him from many of the charges which have been brought against him. His fault hitherto has been an ambition to make his country great before it had been made secure; but in what he so did there is no trace of any undue desire for personal aggrandizement. As a nation rises in the world, so will its rulers rise. That a President of a young Republic should be aware of this and feel that as honour and wealth come to his people so will they come to him, is fair enough. It is but human. I believe that Mr. Burgers thought more of his country than of himself. That he was sanguine, unsteady, and utterly deficient in patience and prudence was the fault of those who elected him rather than of himself.

All these follies, if they were follies, could have been nothing to us but for our close proximity to the borders of the Transvaal. While the gold was being coined and the flag was being stitched, there were never-ending troubles with the Natives. The question of the right to territory in a country which was inhabited by native races when it was invaded by Europeans is one so complex that nothing but superior force has as yet been able to decide it. The white races have gradually obtained possession of whatever land they have wanted because they have been the braver and the stronger people. Philanthropy must put up with the fact, and justice must reconcile herself to it as best she may. I venture to express an opinion that to the minds of all just

men, who have turned this matter in their thoughts with painful anxiety, there has come a solution,—which has by no means satisfied them, but which has been the only solution possible,—that God Almighty has intended that it should be as it is. The increasing populations of the civilized world have been compelled to find for themselves new homes; and that they should make these homes in the lands occupied by people whose power of enjoying them has been very limited, seems to have been arranged—by Destiny. That is the excuse which we make for ourselves; and if we do not find verbal authority for it in Deuteronomy as do the Boers, we think that we collect a general authority from the manifested intention of the Creator.

But in the midst of all this the attempts to deal justly with the original occupants of the soil have of late years been incessant. If we buy the land then it will be ours of right. Or if we surrender and secure to the Native as much as the Native wants, then are we not a benefactor rather than a robber? If we succour the weak against the strong then shall we not justify our position? If in fact we do them more good than harm may we not have quiet consciences? So we have dealt with them intending to be just, but our dealings have always ended in coercion, annexation, dominion and masterdom.

In these dealings who has been able to fix a price or to decide where has been the right to sell? A few cattle have been given for a large territory or even a few beads; and then it has turned out that the recipient of the cattle or beads has had no title to dispose of the land. But the purchaser if

he be strong-handed will stick to his purchase. And then come complications as to property which no judge can unravel. Shall the law of the Native prevail or European laws? and if the former who shall interpret it,—a Native or a European? Some years ago a Zulu king conquered a native tribe which lived on lands which are now claimed as part of the Transvaal and then sold them for a herd of cattle to the Dutch Republic. Time went by and the conquered people were still allowed to live on the land, but the Dutch still claimed it as a part of their empire. Then there arose a warrior among the tribe which had been conquered; and the number of the tribe had increased with peace; and the warrior said that he was then on his own territory and not there by sufferance. And now that he was brave and strong he declared that all the land that had once belonged to his tribe should be his. And so there came war. The warrior was Secocoeni, the son of Sequani who had been conquered by Dingaan the King of the Zulus, and the war came up in the time of Mr. Burgers and has been the cause of our annexation of the Republic. It should have been the first duty of Mr. Burgers to have settled this affair with Secocoeni. His title to the land in question was not very good, but he should have held it or yielded it. If not all he might have yielded some. Or he might have shown himself able to conquer the Native, as Dutchmen and Englishmen have done before,—and have consoled himself with such justification as that I have mentioned. But with his coins and his flags and his railway he seems to have lost that power of inducing his Dutchmen to fight which the Dutch leaders bore his

time have always possessed. There was fighting and the Dutch had certain native allies, who assisted them well. The use of such allies has become quite customary in South Africa. At the very moment in which I am writing we are employing the Fingos against Kreli and the Galekas in Kafraria. But Mr. Burgers with his allies could not conquer Secocoeni although he was again and again rebuked by our Secretary of State at home for the barbarity with which he carried on the war. It is thus that Lord Carnarvon wrote to our Governor at the Cape on the 25th January 1877. "I have to instruct you once more to express to him,"—President Burgers,—“the deep regret and indignation with which H.M. Government view the proceedings of the armed force which is acting in the name and under the authority of the Transvaal Government, and that he is rapidly making impossible the continuance either of those sentiments of respect and confidence towards him, or of those friendly relations with him as the Chief of a neighbouring Government, which it was the earnest hope of H.M. Government to preserve.” This was a nice message for a President to receive, not when he had quelled the Natives by the “armed force which is acting in the name and under the authority of the Transvaal Government,”—and which was undoubtedly the Transvaal army fighting for the just or unjust claims of the country,—out when that armed force had run away after an ineffective effort to drive the enemy from his stronghold!

Whether Mr. Burgers ever received that message I do not know. It was not written till a day or two after the arrival of Theophilus Shepstone at Pretoria,—to which place he

had then gone up as British Commissioner, and could hardly have been handed to the President much before the final overthrow of his authority. Under these circumstances we may hope that he was spared the annoyance of reading it. But other annoyances, some from the same source, must surely have been enough to crush any man, even one so sanguine as Mr. Burgers. During all the latter period of his office he was subjected to a continued hail-storm of reproaches as to slavery from British authorities and British newspapers. These reached him generally from the Cape Colony, and Mr. Burgers, who had come from the Cape, must have known his own old Colony well enough himself to have been sure that if not refuted they would certainly lead to disaster. I do not believe that Mr. Burgers had any leaning towards slavery. He was by no means a Boer among Boers, but has come rather of a younger class of men and from a newer school. But he could only exist in the Transvaal by means of the Boers, and in his existing condition could not exert himself for the fulfilment of the clause of the treaty which forbade slavery.

Then he had against him a tribe of natives whom he could not conquer, and at the same time the British Government and British feeling. And he had not a shilling in the Treasury. Nominal taxes there were;—but no one would pay them. As they were all direct taxes, it was open to the people to pay them or to decline to do so. And they declined. As no one had any confidence in anything, why should any one pay five or ten pounds to a tax gatherer who had no constable at his back to enforce payment? No one

did do so, and there was not a shilling in the Treasury. This was the condition of the South African Republic when Sir Theophilus Shepstone arrived at Pretoria on January 22nd, 1877, with six or seven other gentlemen from Natal and a guard of 25 mounted policemen.

CHAPTER III.

THE TRANSVAAL.—ANNEXATION.

I HAVE endeavoured in the last chapter to tell very shortly the story of the South African Republic and to describe its condition at the moment when our Secretary of State at home took the unusual step of sending a British Commissioner,—not with orders to take possession of the land but with orders which have been held to justify the act when done. I doubt whether there is a precedent for so high-handed a deed in British history. It is as though the rulers of Germany were to say that in their opinion the existence of a Switzerland in Europe was deleterious and dangerous, and that therefore they would abolish Switzerland as a Republic, and annex its territory. It will be said that the case would be different because Switzerland is well governed and prosperous. But the Germans in such a case would say that they thought otherwise,—which is what we say here,—and that they therefore took it. It was we who found fault with the management of that other Republic and we who have taken possession of the land. It is well that the whole truth as to the matter should be understood. If we had done this act in compliance with the expressed wish of the inhabitants generally, that would be a justification. But it

cannot fairly be said that such was the case here. A nation with a popular parliament can only be held to express its opinion to another nation by the voice of its parliament;—and the Volksraad of the Transvaal was altogether opposed to the interference of Great Britain. I will touch upon this matter again presently when alluding to the words of the Commission given to the British Commissioner by the Secretary of State at home;—but I think it must be acknowledged that no other expression of opinion, unless it be a general rising of a people, can be taken as national. In nine cases out of ten petitions ought to be held to mean nothing. They cannot be verified. They show the energy of the instigators of the petition and not of the petitioners. They can be signed by those who have and by those who have not an interest in the matter. The signatures to them can be readily forged. At home in England the right of petitioning is so dear to us from tradition that we still cling to it as one of the bulwarks of our freedom; but there cannot be a statesman, hardly a Member of Parliament among us, who does not feel that pen and ink and agitating management have become so common that petitions are seldom now entitled to much respect.

It may perhaps be said that we have repeatedly done the same thing in India. But a little thinking will show that our Indian annexations have been quite of a different nature. There we have gone on annexing in opposition to the barbarism and weakness of native rule against which our presence in India has, from the first, been a protest. Each annexation has been the result of previous conquest and has

been caused by non-compliance with the demands of the conquerors. In the Transvaal we have annexed a dominion which was established by ourselves in express obedience to our own requisitions, which was in the possession of European rulers, which was altogether independent, and as to the expediency of annexing which we have had nothing to guide us but our own judgment and our own will. It is as though a strong boy should say to a weak one, "It is better that I should have that cricket bat than you," and should therefore take it.

The case will seem to be still stronger if it shall appear, as I think it will, that Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the Commissioner appointed to this work, did what he did do without complete authority. It is evident that there was ~~doubt~~ in the Colonial Office at home. The condition of the Transvaal was very bad. Slavery was rampant. The Natives were being encouraged to rebellion. The President was impotent. The Volksraad was stiff-necked and ignorant. There was no revenue, no order, no obedience. The Dutch seemed to have forgotten even the way to fight. What were we to do with such neighbours,—for whose inefficiency we were in a measure responsible, having ourselves established the Republic? That we must interfere for our own protection in regard to the Natives seemed to be necessary. As has been said so often, there was a house on fire next door to us, in the flames of which we might ourselves be enveloped. Remonstrances had been frequent and had been altogether ineffectual. The Republic was drifting,—nay, had drifted into Chaos. If any other people could have assisted us in putting out the

fire, French, Germans, or Italians,—so that we might not seem to tyrannise,—it would have been so comfortable! But in South Africa we had none to help us. And then though this Republic was more than half Dutch it was also only less than half English.

Something must be done; and therefore an order was sent out directing Sir Theophilus Shepstone to go to Pretoria and see what he could do. Sir Theophilus was and for many years had been Minister for Native Affairs in the Colony of Natal, and was credited,—no doubt correctly,—with knowing more about the Natives than any other European in South Africa. He was a man held in special respect by the King of the Zulus, and the King of the Zulus was in truth the great power whom both Dutch and English would dread should the natives be encouraged to rebel. When men have talked of our South African house being in danger of fire, Cetywayo the King of the Zulus has been the fire to whom they have alluded. So Sir Theophilus started on his journey taking his Commission in his pocket. He took a small body of policemen with him as an escort, but advisedly not a body that might seem by its number to intimidate even so weak a Government as that of the South African Republic.

The writing of the Commission must have been a work of labour, requiring much thought, and a great weighing of words. It had to be imperative and yet hemmed in by all precautions; giving clear instruction, and yet leaving very much to the Commissioner on the spot who would have his work to do in a distant country not connected with the world by telegraph wires. The Commission is long and I will not

quote it all; but it goes on to say that “if the emergency should seem to you to be such as to render it necessary, in order to secure the peace and safety of Our said Colonies and of Our subjects elsewhere that the said territories, or any portion or portions of the same, should *provisionally and pending the announcement of Our pleasure,** be administered in Our name and on Our behalf, then *and in such case only** We—” authorize you to annex so much of any such territories as aforesaid.

But the caution against such annexing was continued much further. “Provided first—that”—no such annexation shall be made—“unless you shall be satisfied that the inhabitants thereof, *or a sufficient number of them, or the Legislature thereof** desire to become Our subjects, nor if any conditions unduly limiting Our power and authority,” are sought to be imposed. And secondly, that, unless the circumstances are such as in your opinion to make it necessary to issue a Proclamation forthwith, no such Proclamation shall be issued by you until the same has been submitted to and approved by——” the Governor of the Cape Colony, all whose titles are given at great length.

Could anything be more guarded, or less likely one would say on the mere perusal of the document, to lead to an immediate and permanent annexation of the whole country. The annexation if made at all was to be provisional only and pending the Queen’s pleasure, and then it was only to be made if the inhabitants, or a sufficient number of them, or the Legislature should wish it. What the sufficient number

* The Italics are my own.

might be was left to the discretion of the Commissioner. But he was only to do this in compliance with the wishes of the people themselves. He was to take temporary possession, —only temporary possession,—of a part of the Transvaal should the people desire it, and in the event of such a measure being approved by a distant Governor, — unless the circumstances were such as to make him think it expedient to do it without such approval. Such was the nature of the Order, and I think that any one reading it before the event would have said that it was not intended to convey an authority for the immediate and permanent annexation of the whole country.

But Sir Theophilus, after a sojourn of ten weeks at Pretoria, in which the question of the annexation was submitted to the Volksraad and in which petitions and counter-petitions were signed, did annex the whole country permanently, without any question of provisional occupation, and without, as far as I have been able to learn, any sanction from the Governor of the Cape Colony. As to conditions limiting Her Majesty's power, the mere allusion to such a condition of things seems to be absurd now that we know what has been done. "Now therefore I do . . . proclaim and make known that from and after the publication hereof the territory heretofore known as the South African Republic . . . shall be, and shall be taken to be, British territory." These are the words which contain the real purport of the Proclamation issued by Sir Theophilus Shepstone at Pretoria on 12th April, 1877. Was ever anything so decided, so audacious, and apparently so opposed to the spirit

of the instructions which the Commissioner had received? When the Secretary of State received a telegram from Madeira, the nearest telegraph station, saying that the Transvaal had been annexed, which he did in the following May, he surely must have been more surprised than any other man in England at what had been done.

Was the deed justifiable? Has it been justified by what has occurred since? And if so how had come about a state of things which had made necessary a proceeding apparently so outrageous? The only man I have met in all South Africa who has questioned the propriety of what has been done is Mr. Burgers, the ousted President. Though I have discussed the matter wherever I have been, taking generally something of a slant against Sir Theophilus,—as I must seem to have done in the remarks I have just made, and to which I always felt myself prompted by the high-handedness of the proceeding,—I have never encountered even a doubtful word on the subject, except in what Mr. Burgers said to me. And Mr. Burgers acknowledged to me, not once or twice only, that the step which had been taken was manifestly beneficial, to the Natives, to the English,—and to the Dutch. He thought that Sir Theophilus had done a great wrong,—but that the wrong done would be of great advantage to every one concerned. He made various complaints;—that the Natives around him had been encouraged to rebel in order that an assumed difficulty might be pleaded;—that no national petition, and indeed no trustworthy petition, had been sent forward praying for annexation;—that the deed was uncalled for and tyrannical;—and that the whole pro-

ceeding was one in which the courtesy due to a weaker nation was neglected and omitted. He then asserted that fresh emigrants would not flock into a land governed under a European crown as they would have done into a Republic. But he repeated his admission that for Dutchmen, Englishmen, and Natives as at present settled in the country, the British rule would be the best.

He alleged as to himself that when Sir Theophilus stated to him his intentions, three courses appeared to be open to him. He might use his influence and his words in assisting the transference of the country to the British. This as President of the Republic he could not do;—and the less so as he did not think that it should be done. Or he might cause Sir Theophilus and his twenty-five policemen to be marched back over the border, treating them on their way as unauthorized intruders. This he would not do, he said, because he knew it to be useless to wage war with Great Britain. Or he might yield and remonstrate;—yield to power while he remonstrated against injustice. This, he said, that he did do. The words and personal bearing of the man recommended themselves to me much. Whether he is to be regarded as a banished patriot or a willing placeman must depend on a delicate question which has not as far as I know yet been answered, though it has been broached,—to which, delicate as it is, I will refer again before I have ended my story.

I had not the pleasure of meeting Sir Theophilus and have the less repugnance therefore to surmise the condition of his mind when he received the order to go to Pretoria. Had

he told me his mind I might have been unable to publish my own surmises. He knew that the native races of the Transvaal unless convinced of the superiority of their white neighbours would ever struggle to prove them inferior,—and that such inferiority if proved would at once be their death-warrant. The Natives had long learned to respect the English and to hate the Dutch;—but even that respect would not restrain them if once they had asserted their masterhood to a white race. And now this state of things was at hand. He was aware that though English troops could be supplied to maintain English authority, English troops would not be lent to fight the battles of the Dutch. There might, nay there probably would be, a native triumph just across our borders which he as a minister in Natal could not interfere to quell,—but which, when a rumour of it should spread among the Zulus on our border, might induce 300,000 coloured subjects to think that they could free themselves by a blow from 20,000 white masters. And he knew the condition which I have attempted to explain,—that these Dutch people in the Transvaal would not pay a stiver of tax, that there was in fact no government, that the gaols were unlocked in order that prisoners might find elsewhere the bread which their gaolers could not get for them, that the posts could not be continued because the Contractors were not paid, that no one would part with a coin which he possessed, that property was unsaleable, that industry was unprofitable, that life was insecure, that Chaos was come upon the land. I do not suppose that Sir Theophilus doubted much when he read the Commission which had

been sent to him, or that he thought very much of all the safeguards and provisions. He probably felt, as did everybody else, that the South African Republic had from the first been a failure,—almost a farce,—and that the sooner so expensive a failure could be brought to an end, the better. If indeed the Volksraad would have voted their own extermination that would have been very well; but he could hardly have expected it. As for petitions, and the wish of a “sufficient number” of the inhabitants,—I should imagine that he must have been a little indifferent to that. His mind probably was made up,—with a resolve to give the Volksraad what time might be needed for their deliberations. They did not deliberate,—only deliberated whether they would deliberate or not, and then declined even to deliberate. Whereupon Sir Theophilus said that then and from thenceforth the Transvaal should be British property. So he put up the Queen’s flag;—and the Transvaal is and probably will remain British property.

I have to acknowledge, with all my sympathies strongly opposed to what I call high-handed political operations, that I think Sir Theophilus was justified. A case of such a kind must in truth be governed by its own merits, and cannot be subjected to a fixed rule. To have annexed only a part of the Transvaal would have been not only useless, but absurd. Not only would the part which we had spared have been hostile to us, but the Dutch within our assumed borders would have envied the independence we had left to others. We shall have trouble enough now in settling our boundaries with the Natives. We should then have had the worse

trouble of settling them with the Dutch. To have waited for authority from the Governor of the Cape Colony would have shown a weakness in his own authority which might have been fatal to Sir Theophilus as he was then placed. No other Governor could know the condition of the matter as well as he did. To get the authority needed he must have wasted six weeks during which it would have been known to every member of the Volksraad that he was waiting. To carry him through it was needed that the Boers should understand that when he said that the land should be annexed, Great Britain was saying so. They did so believe. The President so believed. And therefore the surrender was made without a struggle.

So much for Sir Theophilus and his instructions. In the larger matter which regards Great Britain and her character, we have to enquire whether this arbitrary act has been justified by what has occurred since. In discussing this there are at least four parties concerned, if not more. Mr. Burgers spoke of three, and in South Africa it is natural that reference should be made to those three only. As regards the Natives there can be no question. No friend of theirs can wish it to be otherwise unless they have a friend so foolish as to desire for them an independence which can be obtained only by the extermination or banishment of the European races. That the Natives generally respect the English and do not respect the Dutch is certain. This had come to such a pitch in the Transvaal that it had produced war,—and that war if continued would have meant the destruction of the tribe which was waging it.

Permanent success against white men is impossible for Natives in South Africa. Every war between a tribe and its white neighbours ends in the destruction of the tribe as an independent people. And here, if Secocoeni had been successful against the Dutch,—if the English could have allowed themselves to sit by and see the house all in flames;—Cetywayo, the King of the Zulus, would at once have been at war with Secocoeni. As far as the Natives were concerned, it would indeed have been to “let slip the dogs of war.” It has been one of our great objects in dealing with the Natives, —perhaps that in accomplishing which we should be most proud of what we have done,—to save the tribes from being hounded on to war among themselves by their Chiefs. The Dutch rule in the Transvaal was an incentive to war which was already operating. The house was on fire and could only have been put out by us.

As to the good done to the English of the Transvaal it is hardly necessary that any arguments should be used. We had abandoned the country to Dutch rule in 1852, and it was natural that the Dutch should consider only themselves—and the Natives. After what we had done we clearly had no right to take back the Transvaal by force in order that we might protect the interests of Englishmen who were living there. But it is matter of additional satisfaction that we have been enabled to re-establish a basis of trade in the country;—for the trade of the country has been in the hands of English, Germans, or newly arrived Hollanders, and not in those of the Boers to whom the country was given up. I do not remember to have found a shop or

even an hotel all through the Transvaal in the hands of a Dutch Boer.

But the man who has cause to rejoice the most,—and who as far as I could learn is wide awake to the fact,—is the Boer himself. He is an owner of land,—and on the first of January 1877 his land was hardly worth having. Now he can sell it, and such sales are already being made. He was all astray even as to what duty required of him. Ought he to pay his taxes when no one around him was paying? Of what use would be his little contribution? Therefore he did not pay. And yet he had sense enough to know that when there are no taxes, then there can be no government. Now he will pay his taxes. Ought he to have fought, when those wretched Natives, in their audacity, were trying to recover the land which he had taken from them? Of what use could fighting have been when he had no recognised leader,—when the next Boer to him was not fighting? Now he knows that he will have a leader. Why cultivate his land, or more of it than would feed himself? Why shear his sheep if he could not sell his wool? Now there are markets for him. It was to this condition of not paying, not fighting, and not working that he was coming when British annexation was suggested to him. He could not himself ask to be expatriated; but it may well be understood that he should thoroughly appreciate the advantage to himself of a measure for which as a Dutchman he could not ask. What was wanted was money and the credit which money gives. England had money and the Boer knew well enough that English money could procure for him that which a national

flag, and a gold coinage, and a code of laws, and a promised railway could not achieve. It was almost cruel to ask him to consent to annexation, but it would have been more cruel not to annex him.

But the condition of the fourth party is to be considered. That fourth party is the annexing country. It may be very well for the Natives and for the Dutch, and for the English in the Transvaal, but how will it suit the English at home? It became immediately necessary for us to send a large military force up to the Transvaal, or to its neighbourhood. Something above two regiments have I believe been employed on the service, and money has been demanded from Parliament for the purpose of paying for them. Up to this time England has had to pay about £125,000 for the sake of procuring that security of which I have spoken. Why should she pay this for the Boers,—or even for the English who have settled themselves among the Boers? And then the sum I have named will be but a small part of what we must pay. Hitherto no violent objection has been made at home to the annexation. In Parliament it has been almost as well received by the Opposition as by the Government. No one has said a word against Lord Carnarvon; and hardly a word has been said against Sir Theophilus. But how will it be when other and larger sums are asked for the maintenance of the Transvaal? Surely some one will then arise and say that such payments are altogether antagonistic to our colonial policy,—by which our Colonies, as they are required to give nothing to us, are also required to support themselves.

The answer to this I think must be that we have been compelled thus to deviate from our practice and to put our hands deeply into our pockets by our folly in a former generation. It is because we came to a wrong judgment of our position in 1852,—when we first called upon the Dutch Boers to rule themselves,—that we are now, twenty-five years afterwards, called upon to pay for the mistake that has since occurred. We then endeavoured to limit our responsibility, saying to ourselves that there was a line in South Africa which we would not pass. We had already declined to say the same thing as to Natal and we ought to have seen and acknowledged that doctrine of the house on fire as clearly then as we do now. The Dutch who trekked across the Vaal were our subjects as much as though they were English. Their troubles must ultimately have become our troubles,—whereas their success, had they been successful, might have been as troublesome to us as their troubles. We repudiated two territories, and originated two Republics. The first has come back upon our hands and we must pay the bill. That is the Transvaal. The other, which can pay its own bill, will not come back to us even though we should want it. That is the Orange Free State. I have now answered the three questions. I think the annexation was justifiable. I think that it has been justified by the circumstances that have followed it. And I have given what in my opinion has been the cause for so disagreeable a necessity.

There is one other matter to be mentioned,—that delicate matter to which I have alluded. A report has been spread

all through South Africa that the late President of the South African Republic is to be gratified by a pension of £750 per annum out of the revenues of Great Britain. I trust for every one's sake that that report may not be true. The late President was the chief officer of his country when the annexation was made, and I cannot think that it would be compatible with his honour to receive a pension from the Government of the country which has annihilated the Republic over which he had been called on to preside. When he says that he yielded and remonstrated he takes a highly honourable position and one which cannot be tarnished by any incapability for ruling which he may have shown. But were he to live after that as a pensioner on English bounty,—the bounty of the country which had annihilated his own,—then I think that he had better at least live far away from the Transvaal, and from the hearing of the sound of a Dutchman's voice.

And why should we pay such a pension? Is it necessary that we should silence Mr. Burgers? Have we done him an injustice that we should pay him a compensation for the loss of his office? It is said that we pay dethroned Indian Princes. But we take the revenues of dethroned Indian Princes,—revenues which have become their own by hereditary descent. Mr. Burgers had a month or two more of his Presidency to enjoy, with but little chance of re-election to an office the stipend of which could not have been paid for want of means. But this argument ought not to be required. An expensive and disagreeable duty was forced upon us by a country which could not rule itself, and

certainly we should not convict ourselves of an injustice by giving a pension to the man whose incompet^ence imposed upon us the task. I trust that the rumour though very general has been untrue.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TRANSVAAL.—PRETORIA.

PRETORIA itself, the capital of our new country, is a little town, lying in a basin on a plateau 4,500 feet above the level of the sea,—lat. $25^{\circ} 45'$, S., long. $28^{\circ} 49'$, E. From its latitude it would be considered to be semitropical, but its altitude above the sea is so great as to make the climate temperate. In regard to heat and cold it is very peculiar,—the changes being more rapid and violent than I have experienced in any other place. I was there during the last days of September, which would answer to the last days of March on our side of the equator. The mornings were very fine, but somewhat chilly,—not so as to make a fire desirable but just to give a little sting to the water. The noon-day was hot,—not too hot for exercise; but the heat seemed to increase towards the afternoon, the level rays of the sun being almost oppressive. Then suddenly there would come an air so cold that the stranger who had not expected the change and who was wearing perhaps his lightest clothes would find that he wanted a great coat and a warm cravat round his neck. It was not till I was about to leave the place that I became alive to its peculiarities. I caught a cold every evening in consequence of my ignorance, becom-

ing quite hoarse and thinking of hot water externally and internally as I went to bed;—but in the morning I was always quite well again. I was assured, however, that the climate of Pretoria was one which required great care from its inhabitants. It is subject to very violent storms, and deaths from lightning are not uncommon. The hailstorms, when they come, are very violent, the stones being so large as not unfrequently to batter the cattle to death. I was glad to find that they were unfrequent, and that my good fortune saved me from experiencing their effects. “What does a man do if he be out in the veld?” I asked when I heard these frightful stories. “Put his saddle over his head,” was the answer, showing much as to the custom of a people who seldom walk to any distance always having horses at command. “But if he have not a saddle?” “Ah, then indeed, he would be badly off.” My informants, for I was told of the hailstorms and the necessary saddles more than once, seemed to think that in such a dilemma there would be no hope for a man who, without a saddle, might chance to be beyond the reach of a roof. I could not, however, learn that people were often killed. I therefore accepted the Pretorian hailstones with a grain of salt.

The first President of the Colony was named Pretorius and hence the name of the town, which became the capital in the time of his son who was the second President. The old man was one of the pioneer farmers who first entered in upon the country under circumstances already described, and the family now is very numerous in the Transvaal, occupying many farms. Potchefstroom,—a hundred miles to the south-

west of Pretoria,—was the first capital and is still the bigger town; but President Pretorius the second thought it well to move the seat of Government more to the centre of the large district which the Republic was then claiming, and called the little city Pretoria, after the name of his father.

I am quite unable to say what is the population of the capital, as those of whom I inquired could only guess at it from their own point of view. I should think it might amount to two thousand exclusive of the military. At the time I was there it was of a very shifting nature, and will be so for some months. It has lately become the seat of a British Government, and people have flocked into it knowing that money will be flying about. Money has flown about very readily, and there are hands of course to receive it. Six hundred British soldiers are stationed there under tents, and soldiers, though their pay is low, are great consumers. A single British soldier will consume as much purchased provender as a whole Boer family. But as people are going in, so are they going out. The place therefore in its present condition is like a caravansary rather than an established town. All menial services are done by a Kafir population,—not permanently resident Kafirs who can be counted, but by a migratory imported set who are caught and used as each master or mistress of a family may find it possible to catch and use them. “They always go when you have taught them anything,” one poor lady said to me. Another assured me that two months of continuous service was considered a great comfort. And yet they have their domestic jealousies. I dined at a house at which one of our British soldiers waited

at table, an officer who dined there having kindly brought the much-needed assistance with him. The dinner was cooked by a Kafir who, as the lady of the house told me, was very angry because the soldier was allowed to interfere with the gala arrangements of the day. He did not see why he should not be allowed to show himself among the company after having undergone the heat of the fray. These Kafirs at Pretoria, and through all those parts of the Transvaal which I visited, are an imported population,—the Dutch having made the land too hot to hold them as residents. The Dutch hated them, and they certainly have learned to hate the Dutch in return. Now they will come and settle themselves in Pretoria for a short time and be good-humoured and occasionally serviceable. But till they settle themselves there permanently it is impossible to count them as a resident population.

Down many of the streets of the town,—down all of them that are on the slope of the descent,—little rivulets flow, adding much to the fertility of the gardens and to the feeling of salubrity. Nothing seems to add so much to the prettiness and comfort of a town as open running water, though I doubt whether it be in truth the most healthy mode of providing for man the first necessary of life. Let a traveller, however, live for a few days but a quarter of a mile from his water supply and he will learn what is the comfort of a rivulet just at his door-step. Men who have roughed it in the wilderness, as many of our Colonists have had to do, before they have settled themselves into townships, have learned this lesson so perfectly that they are inclined, perhaps, to be too fond of a deluge. For purposes of gar-

dening in such a place as Pretoria there can be no doubt about the water. The town gardens are large, fertile, and productive, whereas nothing would grow without irrigation.

The streets are broad and well laid out, with a fine square in the centre, and the one fact that they have no houses in them is the only strong argument against them. To those who know the first struggling efforts of a colonial town,—who are familiar with the appearance of a spot on which men have decided to begin a city but have not as yet progressed far, the place with all its attributes and drawbacks will be manifest enough. To those who have never seen a city thus struggling into birth it is difficult to make it intelligible. The old faults of old towns have been well understood and thoroughly avoided. The old town began with a simple cluster of houses in close contiguity, because no more than that was wanted. As the traffic of the day was small, no provision was made for broad spaces. If a man could pass a man, or a horse a horse,—or at most a cart a cart,—no more was needed. Of sanitary laws nothing was known. Air and water were taken for granted. Then as people added themselves to people, as the grocer came to supply the earlier tanner, the butcher the grocer, the merchant tailor his three forerunners, and as a schoolmaster added himself to them to teach their children, house was adjoined to house and lane to lane, till a town built itself after its own devise, and such a London and such a Paris grew into existence as we who are old have lived to see pulled down within the period of our own lives. There was no foresight and a great lack of economy in this old way of city building.

But now the founder has all these examples before his eyes, and is grandly courageous in his determination to avoid the evils of which he has heard and perhaps seen so much. Of course he is sanguine. A founder of cities is necessarily a sanguine man, or he would not find himself employed on such a work. He pegs out his streets and his squares bravely, being stopped by no consideration as to the value of land. He clings to parallelograms as being simple, and in a day or two has his chief thoroughfare a mile long, his cross streets all numbered and named, his pleasant airy squares, each with a peg at each corner, out in the wilderness. Here shall be his Belgravia for the grandees, and this his Cheapside and his Lombard Street for the merchants and bankers. We can understand how pleasant may be the occupation and how pile upon pile would rise before the eyes of the projector, how spires and minarets would ascend, how fountains would play in the open places, and pleasant trees would lend their shade to the broad sunny ways.

Then comes the real commencement with some little hovel at the corner of two as yet invisible streets. Other hovels arise always at a distance from each other and the town begins to be a town. Sometimes there will be success, but much more often a failure. Very many failures I have seen, in which all the efforts of the sanguine founder have not produced more than an Inn, a church, half a dozen stores, and twice as many drinking booths. And yet there have been the broad streets,—and the squares if one would take the trouble to make enquiry. Pretoria has not been a failure.

Among recent attempts of the kind Pretoria is now likely to be a distinguished success. An English Governor is to live there, and there will be English troops,—I fear, for many years. Balls will be given at Pretoria. Judges will hold their courts there, and a Bishop will live in a Pretorian Bishopstowe. But the Pretoria of to-day has its unknown squares, and its broad ill defined streets about which houses straggle in an apparently formless way, none of which have as yet achieved the honours of a second storey. The brooks flow pleasantly, but sometimes demand an inconvenient amount of jumping. The streets lie in holes, in which when it rains the mud is very deep. In all such towns as these mud assumes the force of a fifth element, and becomes so much a matter of course that it is as necessary to be muddy, as it is to be smoke-begrimed in London. In London there is soap and water, and in Pretoria there are, perhaps, clothes-brushes; but a man to be clean either in one place or the other must always be using his soap or his clothes-brush. There are many gardens in Pretoria,—for much of the vacant spaces is so occupied. The time will come in which the gardens will give place to buildings, but in the mean time they are green and pleasant-looking. Perhaps the most peculiar feature of the place is the roses. There are everywhere hedges of roses, hedges which are all roses,—not wild roses but our roses of the garden though generally less sweet to the smell. And with the roses, there are everywhere weeping willows, mourning gracefully over the hitherto unaccomplished aspirations of the country. This tree, which I believe to have been imported from St. Helena, has become common to the

towns and homesteads of the Transvaal. To the eye that is strange to them the roses and weeping willows are very pretty ; but, as with everything else in the world, their very profusion and commonness detracts from their value. The people of Pretoria think no more of their roses, than do those of Bermuda of their oleanders.

In such towns the smallness of the houses is not the characteristic which chiefly produces the air of meanness which certainly strikes the visitor, nor is it their distance from each other, nor their poverty ; but a certain flavour of untidiness which is common to all new towns and which is, I fear, unavoidable. Brandy bottles and sardine boxes meet the eye everywhere. Tins in which pickled good things have been conveyed accumulate themselves at the corners. The straw receptacles in which wine is nowadays conveyed meet the eye constantly, as do paper shirt-collars, rags, old boots, and fragments of wooden cases. There are no dust holes and no scavengers, and all the unseemly relics of a hungry and thirsty race of pioneers are left open to inspection.

And yet in spite of the mud, in spite of the brandy bottles, in spite of the ubiquitous rags Pretoria is both picturesque and promising. The efforts are being made in the right direction, and the cottages which look lowly enough from without have an air of comfort within. I was taken by a gentleman to call on his wife,—an officer of our army who is interested in the gold fields of the Transvaal,—and I found that they had managed to gather round them within a very small space all the comforts of civilized life. There was no

front door and no hall ; but I never entered a room in which I felt myself more inclined to "rest and be thankful." I made various calls, and always with similar results. I found internal prettinesses, with roses and weeping willows outside which reconciled me to sardine boxes, paper collars, and straw liquor-guards.

In the middle of Pretoria is a square, round which are congregated the public offices, the banks, hotels, and some of the chief stores, or shops of the place, and in which are depastured the horses of such travellers as choose to use the grass for the purpose. Ours, I hope, were duly fed within their stables ; but I used to see them wandering about, trying to pick a bit of grass in the main square. And here stands the Dutch Reformed Church,—in the centre,—a large building, and as ugly as any building could possibly be made. Its clergyman, quite a young man, called upon me while I was in Pretoria, and told me that his congregation was spread over an area forty miles round. The people of the town are regular attendants ; for the Dutchman is almost always a religious father of a family, thinking much of all such services as were revered by his fathers before him. But the real congregation consists of the people from the country who flock into the *Nichtmaal*, or Lord's Supper, once in three months, who encamp or live in their waggons in the square round the Church, who take the occasion to make their own purchases and to perform their religious services at the same time. The number attending is much too large to enter the church at once, so that on the appointed Sunday one service succeeds another. The sacrament is given, and

sermons are preached, and friends meet each other, amid the throng of the waggons. The clergyman pressed me to stay and see it;—but at this time my heart had begun to turn homewards very strongly. I had come out to see Pretoria, and, having seen it, was intent upon seeing London once again.

There are various other churches,—all of them small edifices,—in the place, among which there is a place of worship for the Church of England. And there is a resident English clergyman, a University man, who if he live long enough and continue to exercise his functions at Pretoria will probably become the “clergyman of the place.” For such is the nature of Englishmen. Now that the Transvaal is an English Colony there can be no doubt but that the English clergyman will become the “clergyman of the place.”

I would fain give as far as it may be possible an idea to any intending emigrant of what may be the cost of living in Pretoria. Houses are very dear,—if hired; cheap enough if bought. When I was there in September, 1877, the annexation being then four months old, a decent cottage might be bought for seven or eight hundred pounds, for which a rental of seven or eight pounds a month would be demanded. A good four-roomed house with kitchen &c. might be built, land included, for a thousand pounds, the rent demanded for which would be from £150 to £175 a year. Meat was about 6d. a pound, beef being cheaper and I think better than mutton. Butter, quite uneatable, was 2s. a pound. Eggs a shilling a dozen. Fowls 1s. 6d. each. Turkeys, very good, 7s. 6d. to 9s. 6d. each. Coals 10s. a half hundredweight,—and wood

for fuel about £2 for a load of two and a half tons. These prices for fuel would add considerably to the cost of living were it not that fires are rarely necessary except for the purpose of cooking. Bread is quoted at 1s. a loaf of two pounds, but was I think cheaper when I was there. Potatoes were very dear indeed, the price depending altogether on the period of the year and on the season. I doubt whether other vegetables were to be bought in the market, unless it might be pumpkins. Potatoes and green vegetables the inhabitant of Pretoria should grow for himself. And he should be prepared to live without butter. Why the butter of South Africa should be almost always uneatable, culminating into an acme of filth at Pretoria, I cannot say;—but such was my experience. After all men and women can live without butter if other things be in plenty.

Then comes that difficult question of domestic service. All that the inhabitant of Pretoria will get in this respect will cost him very much less than in Europe, very much less indeed than in England, infinitely less than in London. With us at home the cost of domestic service has become out of proportion to our expenditure in other respects, partly because it has become to be thought derogatory to do anything for ourselves, and partly because our servants have been taught by their masters and mistresses to live in idle luxury. Probably no man earning his bread eats so much meat in proportion to the work he does as the ordinary London footman. This is an evil to those who live in London from which the inhabitant of Pretoria will find himself free. He will get a “boy” or perhaps two boys about the house,—never a girl let the mistress of

the family coming out to the Transvaal remember,—to whom he will pay perhaps 10s. a month and whom he will feed upon mealies. The “boy’s” wages and diet will cost perhaps £12 per annum. But indeed they will not cost him so much, for the “boy” will go away, and he will not be able to get another just when he wants one. These boys he will find to be useful, good humoured, and trustworthy,—if only he could keep them. They will nurse his baby, cook his dinner, look after his house, make his bed, and dig his garden. That is they will half do all these things,—with the exception of nursing the baby, whom the Kafir is never known to neglect or injure. The baby perhaps may serve to keep him a whole twelvemonth, for he is very fond of a white baby. The wife of the British gentleman who thus settles himself at Pretoria will, at first, be struck with horror at the appearance of the Kafir, who will probably wear an old soldier’s jacket with a ragged shirt under it and no other article of clothing; and she will not at first suffer the Savage to touch her darling. But she will soon become reconciled to her inmate and the darling will take as naturally to the Kafir man as though he were some tenderest, best instructed old English nurse out of a thoroughly well-to-do British family. And very soon she will only regret the reckless departure of the jet black dependant who had struck her at first with unmingled disgust.

Gradually I suppose these people will learn to cling to their work with some better constancy. I, as a stranger, was tempted to say that better diet, better usage, and better wages would allure them. But I was assured that I was

wrong in this, and that any attempts in that direction only spoil "the Native." No doubt if you teach a Native to understand that he is indispensable to your comfort you raise his own estimation of himself, and may do so in such a manner as to make him absurdly fastidious. He is still irrational, still a Savage. He has to be brought by degrees to bend his neck to the yoke of labour and to learn that con- sidered wages are desirable. That the thing will be done by me I do not at all doubt, and do not think that there is just cause of dissatisfaction at the rate of the present progress. The new comer to Pretoria to whom I am addressing myself will doubtless do something towards perfecting the work. In the meantime his domestic servants will cost him very much less than they have done in England.

A man with a wife and family and £500 a year would I think live with more comfort, certainly with more plenty in Pretoria, than in England. The inhabitants of Pretoria will demur to this, for it is a matter of pride to the denizens of every place to think that the necessaries of life are dearer there than elsewhere. But the cheapness of a place is not to be reckoned only by what people pay for the articles they use. The ways of the country, the requirements which fashion makes, the pitch to which the grandeur of Mrs. Smith has aroused the ambition of Mrs. Jones, the propensities of a community to broadcloth or to fustian,—these are the causes of expensive or of economical living. A gentleman in Pretoria may invite his friends to dinner with no greater establishment than a Kafir boy to cook the dinner and another to hand the plates, whereas he does not dare to

do so in London without paying 10s. for the assistance of the greengrocer.

As, however, men with £500 a year will not emigrate in great numbers to Pretoria it would be more important to say how the labouring man might live in the Transvaal. With him his condition of life does not depend so much on what he will have to pay for what he consumes as on the wages which he may receive. I found that an artizan can generally earn from 10s. to 12s. a day at almost any trade,—if the work of the special trade be required. But I am far from saying that amidst so small a community all artizans would find an opening. At the present moment bricklayers and carpenters are in demand at Pretoria,—and can live in great plenty on their wages.

As to workmen, who are not artizans but agricultural labourers, I hardly think that there is any opening for them in the Transvaal. Though the farmers all complain that they cannot plough their lands because there is no labour, yet they will not pay for work. And though the Kafir is lazy and indifferent, yet he does work sufficiently to prevent the white man from working. As I have said before the white men will not work along with the Kafir at the same labour. If there be but a couple of black men with him he presumes that it is his business to superintend and not to work. This is so completely the case in the Transvaal that it is impossible to name any rate of wages as applicable to white rural labour. Sons work for their fathers or brothers may work together;—but wages are not paid. The Dutchman has a great dislike to paying wages.

The capital of the Transvaal is all alive with soldiers. There are 600 redcoats there, besides artillery, engineers and staff. These men live under canvas at present, and are therefore very visible. Barracks however are being built, with officers' quarters and all the appurtenances of a regular military station. It was odd enough to me to see a world of British tents in the middle of a region hazily spoken of at home six months ago as the South African Republic; but how much stranger must it be to the Dutch Boers who certainly anticipated no such advent. I had the honour of being invited to dine at the mess, and found myself as well entertained as though I had been at Aldershott. When I was sitting with the officers in their uniform around me it seemed as though a little block of England had been cut out and transported to the centre of South Africa.

It may be as well to say a few words here as elsewhere as to the state of education in our new Colony. The law on this matter as it stood under the Republic is the law still. Now, as I write, it is hardly more than six months since the annexation and there has not been time for changes. On no subject was the late President with his Cabinet more alive to the necessity of care and energy, on no subject were there more precise enactments, and on no subject were the legislative enactments more pretentious and inefficacious. There are three classes of schools,—the High Schools, the District Schools, and the Ward Schools, the whole being under the inspection of a Superintendent General of Education. The curriculum at the High Schools is very high indeed,

including Dutch, English, French, German, Latin, Greek, geometry, algebra, and all the ologies, together with logic, music, drawing, and astronomy. The law enacts that the principal master at a High School shall receive £400 a year, and the Assistant Masters £250 each;—but even at these salaries teachers sufficiently instructed could not be found, and when the Superintendent made his last return there was but one High School in the Transvaal, and at that school there were but five pupils. At the High School, the pupils paid 30s. a month, which, presuming there to be two months of holydays in the year, would give £15 per annum. There would be therefore £75 towards maintaining a school of which the Head Master received £400. But the reality of the failure was worse even than this. The law required that all boys and girls should pay the regular fees, but in order to keep up the number of pupils gratuitous instruction was offered. Three months after annexation the five High School pupils had dwindled down to two, and then the school was closed by order of the British Governor. The education no doubt was far too advanced for the public wants; and as it was given by means of the Dutch language only it did not meet the needs of those who were most likely to make use of it. For, even while the Transvaal was a Dutch Republic, the English language was contending for ascendancy with that of the people. In this contention the President with his Government did his best to make Dutch, and Dutch only, the language of the country. For this we cannot blame him. It was naturally his object to maintain the declining nationality of his country. But the parents

and pupils who were likely to profit by such a school as I have described were chiefly English.

At the District and Ward schools the nature of the instruction proposed to be given is lower. The District schools are held in the chief towns,—such as they are,—and the Ward schools in sub-divisions of the Districts. They too have failed for the same reasons. They are too expensive and pretentious. The Salaries,—*i.e.* the lowest salaries permitted by law,—are £200 and £100 for head masters at the two classes of schools, and £125 and £30 for assistant masters. According to the last return there were 236 pupils at the District schools, and 65 at the Ward schools. The pupils pay varying fees, averaging 7s. a month or about £3 10s. per annum each. There are six District schools and two Ward schools, at which the masters' salaries alone would amount to £1,700 per annum,—presuming there to be no assistant masters,—while the total of fees would be about £1,050 per annum. As the Government had been for many months penniless, it need hardly be explained further that the schools must have been in a poor condition. The nominal cost to the State during the last years of the Republic was about £3,500, being more than £11 per year for each pupil over and above the fees. What was still due under the head had of course to be paid out of British taxes when the country was annexed.

But all this does not show the extent of the evil. The white population of the country is supposed to be 45,000, of which about a tenth or 4,500 ought to be at school. The public schools at present show 300. There are some private

schools as to which I could obtain no trustworthy information ; but the pupils educated at them are few in number.

The average Boer is generally satisfied in regard to education if his children can be made to read the Bible. To this must be added such a knowledge of the ritual of the religion of the Dutch Reformed Church as will enable the children to pass the examination necessary for confirmation. " Until this ceremony has been completed they cannot marry. So much, by hook or by crook, is attained, and thus the outermost darkness of ignorance is avoided. But the present law as to education does not provide for even this moderate amount of religious instruction, and is therefore, and has been, most unpopular with the Boers. It must be understood that on all religious matters the late Government was at loggerheads with the bulk of the population, the President being an advocate of free-thinking and absolute secularism,—of an education from which religion should be as far as possible removed ; whereas the Boer is as fanatic, as conservative, and as firmly wedded to the creed of his fathers as an Irish Roman Catholic Coadjutor. It may, on this account, be the easier for the Colonial Government to reconcile the population to some change in the law.

A few of the better class of farmers, in the difficulty which at present exists, maintain a schoolmaster in their houses for a year or two, paying a small salary and entertaining the teachers at their tables. I have met more than one such a schoolmaster in a Boer's house. In the course of my travels I found an Englishman in the family of a Dutchman who could not speak a word of English,—and was astonished to

find so much instructed intelligence in such a position. Formerly there existed a class of itinerant schoolmasters in the Transvaal, who went from house to house carrying with them some rudiments of education, and returning now and again on their tract to see how the seed had prospered. These were supported by the Government of the day, but the late Government in its ambitious desire to effect great things, discontinued this allowance. It is not improbable that the renewal of some such scheme may be suggested.

It will be imperative on the Colonial Government to do something as the law now existing has certainly failed altogether. But there are great difficulties. It is not so much that education has to be provided for the children of a people numbering 45,000;—but that it has to be done for children dispersed over an area as big as Great Britain and Ireland. The families live so far apart, owing to the absurdly large size of the farms, that it is impossible to congregate them in schools.

When I was at Pretoria I rode out with four companions to see a wonderful spot called the “Zoutpan” or saltpan. It is 28 miles from the town and the journey required that we should take out a tent and food, and that we should sleep in the veld. I was mounted on an excellent horse who was always trying to run away with me. This tired me much, and the ground was very hard. While turning myself about upon the ground I could not but think how comfortable the beds are in London. The saltpan, however, was worth the visit. That it had been a volcanic crater there could be no doubt, but unlike all other volcanic craters that I have seen

it was not an aperture on the apex of a mountain. We went north from Pretoria and crossing through the spurs of the Magaliesberg range of hills found ourselves upon a plain which after a while became studded with scrub of thorn bushes. Close to the saltpan, and still on the plain, we came to the residence of a Boer who gave us water,—the dirtiest that ever was given me to drink,—with a stable for our horses and sold us mealies for our animals. As one of our party was a doctor and as the Boer's wife was ill, his hospitality was not ill repaid. A gentle rise of about 200 feet from the house took us to the edge of the pan, which then lay about 300 feet below us,—so as to look as though the earthwork around the valley had been merely thrown out of it as earth might be thrown from any other hole. And this no doubt had been done,—by the operation of nature.

The high outside rim of the cup was about $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles round, with a diameter of 1,500 yards; and the circle was nearly as perfect as that of a cup. Down thence to the salt lake at the bottom the inside of the bowl fell steeply but gradually, and was thickly covered with bush. The perfect regularity of shape was, to the eye, the most wonderful feature of the phenomenon. At the bottom to which we descended lay the shallow salt lake, which at the time of our visit was about half full,—or half covered, I might better say, in describing the gently shelving bottom of which not more than a moiety was under water. In very dry weather there is no water at all,—and then no salt. When full the lake is about 400 yards across.

Some enterprising Englishman had put up a large iron pan 36 feet by 20, and 18 inches deep, with a furnace under it, which, as everything had been brought out from England at a great cost for land transit, must have been an expensive operation. But it had been deserted because the late Government had been unable to protect him in the rights which he attempted to hire from them. The farmers of the neighbourhood would not allow themselves to be debarred from taking the salt,—and cared nothing for the facts that the Government claimed the privilege of disposing of the salt and that the Englishman had bought the privilege. The Englishman therefore withdrew, leaving behind him his iron pan and his furnace, no doubt with some bitter feelings.

It is probable, I believe, that another Englishman,—or a Scotchman,—will now commence proceedings there, expecting that Downing Street will give better security than a Republican President. In the meantime our friend the Boer pays £50 per annum to the Government, and charges all comers some small fine per load for what they take. Baskets are inserted into the water and are pulled up full of slush. This is deposited on the shore and allowed to drain itself. On the residuum carbonate of soda rises, with a thick layer, as solid cream on standing milk;—and below this there is the salt more or less pure,—very nasty, tasting to me as though it were putrid,—but sufficing without other operation for the curing of meat and for the use of cattle. I was told by one of our party that the friable stone which we found all around is soda-feldspar from which, as it melts

in the rain, the salt is brought down. Here, at this place, there is but one crater;—whereas at other places of a like nature, as in New Zealand and Central America, I have seen various mouths crowded together, like disjected fragments of a great aperture down into the earth. Here there is but the one circle, and that is as regular as though it had been the work of men's hands.

Such saltpans in South Africa are common, though I saw none other but the one which I have described. The northern district of the Transvaal is called Zoutpan^oberg from the number of its saltpans,—and there are [others in other parts of the country. I do not know that there is much else particularly worthy of notice in the neighbourhood of Pretoria, unless it be the wonderboom,—a pretty green over-arching tree, which makes for its visitors a large bower capable of holding perhaps 50 persons. It is a graceful green tree;—but not very wonderful.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRANSVAAL: ITS CONDITION AND PRODUCTS.

AMONG the products of the Transvaal gold must be reckoned first, because gold in itself is so precious and so important a commodity, that it will ever force itself into the first rank, —and because notice was first attracted to the Transvaal in Europe, or at any rate in England, by the discovery of gold in the country and by the establishment of gold fields. But I believe that the gold which has hitherto been extracted from the auriferous deposits of the country has been far from paying the expenses incurred in finding them and bringing them into the market. Gold is a product of the earth which will be greedily sought, even when the seeker loses by his labour. I doubt even whether the Australian gold would be found to have paid for itself if an accurate calculation were made. I know that the promoters of Australian gold enterprises and the shareholders in Australian Gold Companies would attempt to cover me with ridicule for expressing such an opinion were I to discuss the matter with them. But these enterprising and occasionally successful people hardly look at the question all round. Before it can be answered with accuracy account must be taken not only of all the money lost, but of the time lost also in unsuccessful search,

—and of such failures the world takes no record. Be that as it may gold has done very much to make the fortune of the Australian Colonies. This has not been done by the wealth of the gold-finders. It is only now and then, ^{and} and I may say that the nows and thens are rare,—that we find a gold-seeker who has retired into a settled condition of wealth as the result of his labours among the Gold Fields. But great towns have sprung up, and tradesmen have become wealthy, and communities have grown into compact forms, by the expenditure which the gold-seekers have created. Melbourne is a great city and Ballarat is a great city, not because the Victorian gold-diggers have been rich and successful;—but because the trade of gold-finding creates a great outlay. If the gold-diggers themselves have not been rich they have enriched the bankers and the wine-merchants and the grocers and the butchers and the inn-keepers who have waited upon them. While one gold-digger starves or lives upon his little capital, another drinks champagne. Even the first contributes something to the building up of a country, but the champagne-drinker contributes a great deal. There is no better customer to the tradesman, no more potent consumer, than the man who is finding gold from day to day. Gold becomes common to him, and silver contemptible.

I say this for the purpose of showing that though the gold trade of the Transvaal has not as yet been remunerative,—though it may perhaps never be truly remunerative to the gold-seekers,—it may nevertheless help to bring a population to the country which will build it up, and make

it prosperous. It will do so in the teeth of the despair and ruin which unsuccessful speculations create. There is a charm and a power about gold which is so seductive and inebriating that judgment and calculation are ignored by its votaries. If there be gold in a country men will seek it though it has been sought there for years with disastrous effects. It creates a sanguine confidence which teaches the gold-dreamer to believe that he will succeed where hundreds have failed. It despises climate, and reconciles the harshness of manual labour to those who have been soft of hand and luxurious of habit. I am not now intending to warn the covetous against the Gold Fields of South Africa;—but am simply expressing an opinion that though these gold regions have hitherto created no wealth, though henceforth they should not be the source of fortune to the speculators, they will certainly serve to bring white inhabitants into the country.

Gold as a modern discovery in South Africa was first found at Tatin in 1867. That there had been gold up north, near the Eastern coast, within the tropics, there can be little doubt. There are those who are perfectly satisfied that Ophir was here situated and that the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon's court from these realms. As I once wrote a chapter to prove that the Queen of Sheba reigned in the Isle of Ceylon and that Ophir was Point de Galle, I will not now go into that subject. It has no special interest for the Transvaal which as a gold country must sink or swim by its own resources. But Tatin though not within the Transvaal, is only just without it, being to the north of the

Limpopo river which is the boundary of our Colony in that direction.

The Limpopo is an unfortunate river as much of its valley with a considerable district on each side of it is subjected by nature to an abominable curse,—which population and cultivation will in the course of years probably remove but which at present is almost fatal to European efforts at work within the region affected. There is a fly,—called the Tsetse fly,—which destroys all horses and cattle which come within the regions which it selects for its own purposes. Why it should be destructive to a party of horses or to a team of oxen and not to men has I believe to be yet found out. But as men cannot carry themselves and their tools into these districts without horses or oxen, the evil is almost overpowering. The courses of the fly are so well known as to have enabled geographers to mark out on the maps the limits of the Tsetse country. The valley of the Limpopo river may be taken as giving a general idea of the district so afflicted, the distance of the fly-invested region varying from half a dozen to 60 and 80 miles from the river. But towards the East it runs down across the Portuguese possessions never quite touching the sea but just reaching Zululand.

Tatin is to the north west of this region, and though the place itself is not within the fly boundary, all ingress and egress must have been much impeded by the nuisance. The first discovery there of gold is said to have been made by Mauch. There has been heavy work carried on in the district and a quartz-crushing machine was used there. When I was in the Transvaal these works had been abandoned, but of the

existence of gold in the country around there can be no doubt. In 1868 the same explorer, Mauch, found gold at a spot considerably to the south east of this,—south of the Limpopo and the Tsetse district, just north of the Olifant's river and in the Transvaal. Then in 1871 Mr. Button found gold at Marabas Stad, not far to the west of Mauch's discovery, in the neighbourhood of which the mines at Eesteling are now being worked by an English Company. On the Marabas-Stad gold fields a printed report was made by Captain Elton in 1872, and a considerable sum of money must have been spent. The Eesteling reef is the only one at present worked in the neighbourhood. Captain Elton's report seems to promise much on the condition that a sufficient sum of money be raised to enable the district to be thoroughly "prospected" by an able body of fifty gold-miners for a period of six months. Captain Elton no doubt understood his subject, but the adequate means for the search suggested by him have not yet been raised. And, indeed, it is not thus that gold fields have been opened. The chances of success are too small for men in cold blood to subscribe money at a distance. The work has to be done by the gambling energy of men who rush to the spot trusting that they may individually grasp the gold, fill their pockets with the gold, and thus have in a few months, perhaps in a few days or hours, a superabundance of that which they have ever been desiring but which has always been so hard to get! The great Australian and Californian enterprises have always been commenced by rushes of individual miners to some favoured spot, and not by companies floated by sub-

scription. The companies have come afterwards, but individual enterprise has done the pioneering work.

In 1873 gold was found in the Lydenburg district which is south of the Olifant's river. Here are the diggings called Pilgrim's Rest, and here the search for gold is still carried on,—not as I am told with altogether favourable results. One nugget has been found weighing nearly 18 pounds. Had there been a few more such treasures brought to light the Lydenburg gold fields would have been famous. There are two crushing machines now at work, and skilled European miners are earning from 10s. to 12s. a day. The place is healthy, and though tropical is not within the tropics. A considerable number of Kafirs are employed at low rates of wages, but they have not as yet obtained a reputation as good miners. The white employer of black labour in South Africa does not allow that the Kafir does anything well.

Among other difficulties and drawbacks to gold mining in South Africa the want of fuel for steam is one. Wood of course is used, but I am told that wood is already becoming scarce and dear. And then the great distance from the coast, the badness of the roads, and the lack of the means of carriage exaggerates all the other difficulties. Machinery, provisions, and the very men themselves have to be brought into the country at a cost which very materially interferes with the chances of a final satisfactory result. If there be a railway from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay,—as at some not very remote date there probably will be,—then that railway will pass either through or very near to the Lydenburg district,

and in that case the Lydenburg gold fields will become all alive with mining life.

Attempts are always made to show what gold fields have done in the way of produce by Government records of the gold exported. In the second great exhibition of London we saw an enormous yellow pyramid near the door, and were told that the gold taken out of Victoria would if collected make a pyramid of just that size. To enable the makers of the pyramid to arrive at that result it was necessary that they should know how much gold had been taken from Victoria. I presume that the records of the Colony did tell of so much,—but if so the gold found must have been considerably more. For gold is portable and can be carried away in a man's pocket without any record. And as that which was recorded was taxed, it is probable that very much was taken away, untaxed, in some private fashion. As to the Transvaal gold a record of that supposed to be exported has been kept at the Custom House in Natal, which shows but very poor results. It is as follows:—

1873	.	.	.	.	.	£735
1874	.	.	.	.	.	4,710
1875	.	.	.	.	.	28,443
1876 (first six months)	.	.	.	.	.	13,660

£47,538

This sum can have done but little more than paid for the necessary transport of the machinery and other matters which have been carried up from the coast. It certainly cannot also have paid for the machinery itself. The bulk of

the gold found has, however, been probably carried down to the coast at Eort Elizabeth or Capetown without any record.

Such is all that I have to say respecting the Gold Fields of the Transvaal,—and it is very little. I did not visit them, and had I done so I do not know that I could have said much more. I conscientiously inspected many Gold mines in Australia, going down into the bowels of the earth 500 feet here and 600 feet there at much personal inconvenience, and some danger to one altogether unused to mining operations; but I do not know that I did any good by this exercise of valour and conscience. A man should be a mineralogist to be able to take advantage of such inspections. Had I visited Pilgrim Rest I could have said how the men looked who were there working, and might have attempted to guess whether they were contented with their lot;—but I could have said nothing as to the success of the place with more accuracy than I do now.

The Transvaal is said, and I believe correctly, to be very rich in other minerals besides gold;—but the travellers in new countries are always startled by sanguine descriptions of wealth which is not in view. Lead and cobalt are certainly being worked. Coal is found in beds all along the eastern boundary of the country, and will probably some day be the most valuable product of the country. Did I not myself see it burning at Stander's Drift? Iron is said to be plentiful in almost every district of the Colony and has been long used by the natives in making weapons and ornaments. Copper also has been worked by the natives and is now found in old pits, where it has been dug to the depth of

from 30 to 40 feet. A variety of copper ornaments are worn by the Kafirs of the northern parts of the Transvaal who have known how to extract the metal from the mineral and to smelt it into pure ore. No mining operations in search of copper have, as I believe, yet been carried on by white men in the country. At an Agricultural Show which was held in 1876 at Potchefstroom, the chief town in the southern part of the Transvaal, prizes were awarded for specimens of the following minerals found in the country itself. Gold-bearing quartz, alluvial gold, copper, tin, lead, iron, plumbago, cobalt, and coal. The following is an extract from a report of the Show, which I borrow from Messrs. Silver's South African Guide Book. "We believe there is no other country in the whole world that could have presented to the public gaze such a variety of minerals as were seen in the room set apart for their exhibition and which upon first entering reminded one of a charming museum; and all these minerals and earthy substances, we are informed, were the products of this country. We saw gold both quartz and alluvial,—not in small quantities but pounds in weight; coal by the ton,—silver, iron, lead. We do not know what to say about this last mineral; but there it was, not in small lumps, as previously exhibited, but immense quantities of ore, and molten bars by the hundred."

This is somewhat flowery, but I believe the statements to be substantially true. The metals are all there, but I do not know whether any of them have yet been so worked as to pay for expenses and to give a profit. All the good things in the Transvaal seem to be so hard to come at, that it is

like looking and longing for grapes, hanging high above our reach. But when grapes are really good and plentiful, ladders are at last procured, and so it will be with the grapes of the Transvaal.

The ladder which is especially wanted is of course a Railway. President Burgers among his other high schemes was fully aware of this and made a journey to Europe during the days of his power with the view of raising funds for this purpose. Like all his schemes it was unsuccessful, but he did raise in Holland a sum of £90,958 for this purpose, which has been expended on railway materials, or perhaps tendered to the Republic in that shape. These are now lying at Delagoa Bay, and the sum above named is part of the responsibility which England has assumed in annexing the Republic.

The question of a Railway is of all the most vital to the new Colony. The Transvaal has no seaboard, and no navigable rivers, and no available outlet for its produce. Pretoria is about 450 miles from Durban, which at present is the seaport it uses, and the road to Durban is but half made and unbridged. The traffic is by oxen, and oxen cannot travel in dry weather because there is no grass for them to eat. They often cannot travel in wet weather because the rivers are unpassable and the mud is overwhelming. If any country ever wanted a Railway it is the Transvaal.

But whence shall the money come? Pretoria is about 300 miles distant from the excellent Portuguese harbour at Delagoa Bay, and it was to this outlet that President Burgers looked. But an undertaking to construct a railway through

an unsurveyed country at the rate of £1,000 a mile was manifestly a castle in the air. If the absolute money could have been obtained, hard cash in hand, the thing could not have been half done. But President Burgers was one of those men who believe that if you can only set an enterprise well on foot the gods themselves will look after its accomplishment,—that if you can expend money on an object other money will come to look after that which has been expended. But here, in the Transvaal, he could not get his enterprise on foot; and I fear that certain railway materials lying at Delagoa Bay, and more or less suited for the purpose, are all that England has to show for the debt she has taken upon her shoulders.

I am not very anxious to offer an opinion as to the best route for a railway out from the Transvaal to the sea. Ne sutor ultra crepidam;—and the proper answering of such a question is, I fear, beyond the reach of my skill. But the reasons I have heard for the Delagoa Bay seem to me to be strong,—and those against it to be weak. The harbour at the Bay is very good,—perhaps the only thoroughly good harbour in South Africa, whereas that at Durban is at present very bad. Expensive operations may improve it, but little or nothing has as yet been done to lessen the inconvenience occasioned by its sand-bar. Durban is 450 miles from the capital of the Transvaal, whereas Delagoa Bay is only two-thirds of that distance. The land falls gradually from Pretoria to the Bay, whereas in going to Durban the line would twice have to be raised to high levels. And then the route to the Bay would run by the Gold Fields, whereas

the other line would go through a district less likely to be productive of traffic. It is alleged on the other hand that as Delagoa Bay belongs to the Portuguese, and as the Portuguese will probably be unwilling to part with the possession, the making of a railway into their territory would be inexpedient. I cannot see that there is anything in this argument. The Americans of the United States made a railway across the Isthmus of Panama with excellent financial results, and in Europe each railway enterprise has not been stopped by the bounds of the country which it has occupied. The Portuguese have offered to take some share in the construction, and by doing so would lessen the effort which the Colony will be obliged to make. It is also alleged that Lorenzo Marques, the Portuguese town at Delagoa Bay, is very unhealthy. I believe that it is so. Tropical towns on the sea board are apt to be unhealthy, and Lorenzo Marques though not within the tropics is tropical. But so is Aspinwall, the terminus of the Panama Railway, unhealthy, being peculiarly subject to the Chagres fever. But in the pursuit of wealth men will endure bad climate. That at Delagoa Bay is by no means so bad as to frighten passengers, though it will probably be injurious to the construction of the railway. To the ordinary traffic of a constructed railway it will hardly be injurious at all.

If the Natal Colony would join the Transvaal in the cost, making the railway up to its own boundary, then the Natal line would no doubt be the best. The people of the Transvaal would compensate themselves for the bad harbour at Durban by the lessening of their own expenditure, and the

line as a whole would be better for British interests in general than that to the Portuguese coast. But there is but little probability of this. Natal wants a line from its capital to its coast, and will have such a line almost by the time that these words are published. But it cares comparatively little for a line through 175 miles of its country up to its boundary at Newcastle, over which the traffic would be for the benefit of the Transvaal rather than for that of Natal. Estcourt and Newcastle which are in Natal would no doubt be pleased, but Natal will not spend its money for the sake of Estcourt and Newcastle.

But when the route for the railway shall have been decided, whence shall the money come? No one looking at the position of the country will be slow to say that a railway is so necessary for the purposes of the Colony that it must expend its first and its greatest energies in achieving that object. It is as would be the possession of a corkscrew to a man having a bottle of wine in the desert. There is no getting at the imprisoned treasure without it. The farms will not be cultivated, the mines will not be worked, the towns will not be built, the people will not come without it. President Burgers, prone as he was to build castles in the air, saw at any rate, when he planned the railway, where the foundations should be laid for a true and serviceable edifice. But then we must return to the question,—whence shall the money come?

Well-to-do Colonies find no difficulty in borrowing money for their own purposes at a moderate rate of interest,—say 4 per cent. Victoria and New South Wales have made their

railways most successfully, and New Zealand has shown what a Colony can do in borrowing. But the Transvaal is not as yet a well-to-do Colony, and certainly could not go into the money market with any hope of success with the mere offer of her own security,—such as that security is at this moment. This is so manifestly the case that no one proposes to do so. Mr. Burgers went home for the purpose and succeeded only in getting a quantity of material,—for which, in the end, the British Government will have to pay probably more than twice the value.

I think I am justified in saying that the idea among those who are now managing the Colony is to induce the Government at home to guarantee a loan,—which means that the Transvaal should be enabled to borrow on the best security that the world has yet produced, that namely of the British nation. And perhaps there is something to warrant this expectation on their part. The annexation, distasteful as the idea is at home of a measure so high-handed and so apparently unwarrantable, has been well received. It has been approved by our Secretary of State, who is himself approved of in what he has caused to be done by Parliament and the nation. The Secretary of State must feel a tenderness for the Transvaal, as we all do for any belonging of our own which has turned out better than we expected. The annexation has turned out so well that they who are now concerned with its affairs seem to expect that the British Government and the British Parliament will assent to the giving of such security. It may be that they are right. Writing when and where I am now I have no

means of knowing how far the need for such a loan and the undoubted utility of such a railway may induce those who have the power in their hands to depart from what I believe to be now the established usage of the mother country in regard to its Colonies,—viz., that of sanctioning loans only when they can be floated on the security of the Colony itself.

If I may venture to express an opinion on the subject, I think that that usage should be followed in this case. No doubt the making of the railway would be postponed in this way,—or rather would be accelerated if the British name and British credit were to be pawned for Transvaal purpose; but I doubt the justice of risking British money in such a cause. The Transvaal colonist in making such an application would in fact be asking for the use of capital at British rates of interest with the object of making colonial profits. The risk would attach wholly to the mother country. The profits, if profits should come, would belong wholly to the Colony.

Money, too, with nations and with colonies is valued and used on the same principles as with individuals. When it has been easily got, without personal labour, proffered lightly without requirement of responsibility or demand for security, it is spent as easily and too often is used foolishly. Lend a man money on security and he will know that every shilling that he spends must come at last out of his own pocket. If money for the purpose required were at once thrown into the Transvaal,—as might be the case to-morrow if the British Government were to secure the loan,—there

would immediately arise a feeling that wealth was being scattered about broadcast, and that a halcyon time had come in which parsimony and prudence were no longer needed. The thing would have been too easy,—and easy things are seldom useful and are never valued.

At the present moment Great Britain is paying the Transvaal bill. The marching to and fro of the soldiers, the salaries of the Governors and other officials, the debts of the late Government, the interests on loans already made, the sums necessary for the gradual redemption of loans, I fear even a pension for the late President, are provided or are to be provided out of British taxes. The country was annexed on 12th April. On 8th June a letter was written from the Colonial Office to the Treasury, showing that we had annexed an existing debt of £217,158 for which we were responsible, and that we had expended £25,000 in marching troops up to the Transvaal for the sake of giving safety to the inhabitants and their property. The report then goes on to its natural purpose. "Lord Carnarvon is of opinion that it may be possible to meet the more immediate requirements of the moment if their Lordships will make an advance of £100,000 in aid of the revenues of the Transvaal, *to be repaid as soon as practicable*. Unless aid is given at once the new province would be obliged to endeavour to borrow at a ruinously high rate of interest." I doubt whether the idea of repayment has taken so strong a hold of the people in the Transvaal, as it has of the officials in Downing Street. In a former paragraph of the report the Secretary of State thus excuses himself for making the appli-

cation. "It is with great unwillingness that Lord Carnarvon feels himself compelled to have recourse to the assistance of the Imperial Treasury in this matter, but he is satisfied that the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury will readily acknowledge that in this most difficult case he has had no alternative. The annexation of the Transvaal with all its consequent liabilities, political as well as financial, *has been neither coveted nor sought by him* ;"—the italics here and above are my own ;—"and it is only a sincere conviction that this step was necessary in order to prevent most serious danger to Her Majesty's Colonies in South Africa which has persuaded him to approve the late action of Sir T. Shepstone."

The £100,000 was advanced, if not without a scruple at least without a doubt, whatever might be the expectations of the Treasury as to speedy repayment ; and there can be little doubt, I fear, that further advances will be needed and made before the resources of the country in the shape of collected taxes will suffice to pay the expenses of the country, including the gradual redemption of the Dutch loans. But if the country cannot do this soon the annexation will certainly have been a failure. Great as is the parliamentary strength of the present Ministry, Parliament would hardly endure the idea of paying permanently for the stability and security of a Dutch population out of the British pocket. I do believe myself that the country will be able to pay its way in the course of some years ;—but I do not believe that the influx of a large loan on easy terms, the expenditure of which must to a great measure be entrusted to the

Colony, would hasten the coming of this desirable condition. There would be a feeling engendered,—if that can be said to be engendered which to some extent already exists,—that “nunky pays for all.” Neither for Colony nor for Mother Country can it be well that nunky should either pay or be supposed to pay through the nose.

When it shall once be known that the Transvaal is paying its own bill, governing itself and protecting itself out of its own revenues, then the raising of a sufficient loan for its railway on its own security will not be difficult. It may even then,—when that day comes,—have to pay a percentage something higher than it would have to give under a British guarantee; but the money will be its own, brought into use on its own security, and will then be treated with respect and used with care. The Transvaal no doubt wants a railway sorely, but it has no right to expect that a railway shall be raised for it, as by a magician’s wand. Like other people, and other countries the Transvaal should struggle hard to get what it wants, and if it struggles honestly no doubt will have its railway and will enjoy it when it has it.

“The Transvaal may in truth be called the ‘corn chamber’ of South Eastern Africa, for no other Colony or State in this part of the world produces wheat of such superior quality or offers so many and varied advantages to farming pursuits.” This is extracted from Mr. Jeppe’s excellent Transvaal Directory. The words are again somewhat flowery, as is always the nature of national self-praise as expressed in national literature. But the capability of the Transvaal for producing wheat is undoubted; as are also the

facts that it has for years past fed itself,—with casual exceptions which amount to nothing,—and that it has done something towards feeding the great influx of population which has been made into the Diamond Fields. It has also continually sent a certain amount of flour and corn into Natal and over its northern and western borders for the use of those wandering Europeans, who are seeking their fortunes among the distant tribes of South Africa. In estimating the wheat produce of the country these are I know but idle words. A great deal of wheat,—when the words are written and printed,—means nothing. It is like saying that a horse is a very good horse when the owner desires to sell him. The vendor should produce his statistics as to the horse in the shape of an opinion from a veterinary surgeon. If Mr. Jeppe had given statistics as to the wheat-produce of the Transvaal during the last few years it would have been better. Statistics are generally believed and always look like evidence. But unless Mr. Jeppe had created them himself, he could not produce them,—for there are none. I think I may say that a very large portion of the country,—all of it indeed which does not come under tropical influences, with the exception of regions which are mountainous or stoney,—is certainly capable of bearing wheat; but I have no means whatever of telling the reader what wheat it has already produced.

It is certain, however, that the cereal produce of the country is curtailed by most pernicious circumstances against which the very best of governments though joined by the very best of climates can only operate slowly. One of these circum-

stances is the enormous size of the existing farms. That great colonial quidnunc and speculator in colonial matters, Gibbon Wakefield, enunciated one great truth when he declared that all land in new countries should be sold to the new comers at a price. By this he meant, that let the price be what it might land should not be given away, but should be parted with in such a manner as to induce in the mind of the incoming proprietor a feeling that he had paid for it its proper price, and that he should value the land accordingly. The thing given is never valued as is the thing bought,—as is the thing for which hard-earned money has been handed over, money which is surrendered with a pang, and which leaves behind a lasting remorse unless he who has parted with it can make himself believe that he has at least got for it its full worth. Now the land in the Transvaal generally has never been sold,—and yet it has almost entirely become the property of private occupiers. The Dutchmen who came into the country brought with them ideas and usages as to the distribution of land from the Cape Colony, and following their ideas and usages they divided the soil among themselves adjudging so much to every claimant who came forward as a certified burgher. The amount determined on as comprising a sufficient farm for such an individual was 3,000 morgen,—which is something more than 6,000 acres. The Dutchman in South Africa has ever been greedy of land, feeling himself to be cribbed, cabined, and confined if a neighbour be near to him. It was in a great measure because land was not in sufficient plenty for him that he “trekked” away from the Cape Colony. Even there 3,000 “morgen” of land had been his idea

of a farm,—which farm was to satisfy his pastoral as well as his much smaller agricultural needs. When at last he found his way into the Transvaal and became a free Republican, his first ambition was for land to fulfil the lust of his heart. The country therefore was divided into 6,000-acre farms,—many of which however contained much more than that number of acres,—and in many cases more than one farm fell into the hands of one Dutchman. The consequences are that there is not room for fresh comers and that nevertheless the land is not a quarter occupied.

Nor is this the only or perhaps the greatest evil of the system which I have attempted to describe. The Boer has become solitary, self-dependent, some would say half savage in his habits. The self-dependent man is almost as injurious to the world at large as the idle man. The good and useful citizen is he who works for the comfort of others and requires the work of others for his own comfort. The Boer feels a pride in his acres, though his acres may do nothing for him. He desires no neighbours though neighbours would buy his produce. He declares he cannot plough his fields because he cannot get labour, but he will allow no Kafirs to make their kraals on his land. Therefore he wraps himself up in himself, eats his billetong,—strips of meat dried in the sun,—and his own flour, and feels himself to be an aristocrat because he is independent.

If the farms in the Transvaal could be at once divided, and a moiety from each owner taken away without compensation, not only would the country itself be soon improved by such an arrangement, but the farmers also themselves from whom

the land had been taken. Their titles, however, are good and they are lords of the soil beyond the power of any such arbitrary legislation. But all the influence of government should be used to favour subdivision. Subdivisions no doubt are made from day to day. As I went through the country I heard of this man having half a "plaats," and that man a quarter. These diminished holdings had probably arisen from family arrangements, possibly from sales. Farms frequently are sold,—freehold lands passing from hand to hand at prices varying from 1s. an acre upwards. Land therefore is very vile,—what I would call cheap if it were to be found in the market when wanted and in the quantities wanted. In our Australian Colonies land is not as a rule sold under 20s. an acre; but it is being sold daily, because men of small means can always purchase small areas from the Government, and because the Governments afford easy terms. But the land in the Transvaal is locked up and unused,—and not open to new comers. Therefore it is that the produce is small, that the roads are desolate, and that the country to the eye of the traveller appears like a neglected wilderness.

What may be the remedy for this I am not prepared to say after the sojourn of but a few weeks in the country; but it is probable that a remedy may be found by making the transfer of land easy and profitable to the Boers.

As this land will produce wheat, so will it also other cereals—such as barley, oats, and Indian corn. Hay, such as we use at home, is unknown. The food given to stabled cattle is Indian corn or forage, such as I have before mentioned,—that is young corn, wheat, oats, or barley cut before

fully grown and dried. This is considered to be the best food for horses all through South Africa.

The fruits of the country are very plentiful;—oranges, lemons, figs, grapes, peaches, apricots, apples, pears, and many others. The climate is more tropical than ours, so as to give the oranges and lemons, but not so much so as to exclude pears and apples.

No doubt it may,—as far as its nature is concerned,—become a land flowing with milk and honey, if the evil effects of remoteness and of a bad beginning can be removed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRANSVAAL.—PRETORIA TO THE DIAMOND FIELDS.

ON the 1st of October I and my friend started from Pretoria for the Diamond Fields, having spent a pleasant week at the capital of the Transvaal. There was, however, one regret. I had not seen Sir Theophilus Shepstone though I had been entertained at his house. He, during the time, had been absent on one of those pilgrimages which Colonial Governors make through their domains, and would be absent so long that I could not afford the time to wait his return. I should much have liked to discuss with him the question of the annexation, and to have heard from his own lips, as I had heard from those of Mr. Burgers, a description of what had passed at the interviews between them. I should have been glad, also, to have learned from himself what he had thought of the danger to which the Dutch community had been subject from the Kafirs and Zulus,—from Secocoeni and Cetywayo,—at the moment of his coming. But the tale which was not told to me by him was, I think, told with accuracy by some of those who were with him. I have spoken my opinion very plainly, and I hope not too confidently of the affair, and I will only add to that now an assurance of my conviction that had I been in Sir T. Shepstone's place and done as he did,

I should have been proud of the way I had served my country.

We started in our cart with our horses as we thought in grand condition. While at Pretoria we had been congratulated on the way in which we had made our purchases and travelled the road surmounting South African difficulties as though we had been at the work all our lives. We had refilled our commissariat chest, and with the exception that my companion had shied a bottle of brandy,—joint property,—at the head of a dog that would bite him,—not me,—as we were packing the cart, there had been as yet no misfortune. Our Cape-boy driver had not once been drunk and nothing material had been lost or broken. We got off at 11 A.M.; and at half past one P.M.,—having travelled about fifteen miles in the normal two and a half hours,—we spanned out and shared our lunch with a very hungry-looking Dutchman who squatted himself on his haunches close to our little fire. He was herding cattle and seemed to be very poor and hungry. I imagined him to be some unfortunate who was working for low wages at a distance from his home. But I found him to be the lord of the soil, the owner of the herd, and the possessor of a homestead about a mile distant. I have no doubt he would have given me what he had to give if I had called at his house. As it was he seemed to be delighted with fried bacon and biscuits, and was aroused almost to enthusiasm over a little drop of brandy and water.

On our road during this day we stopped at an accommodation house, as it is called in the country,—or small Inn, kept by an Englishman. Here before the door I saw flying a flag

intended to represent the colours of the Transvaal Dutch Republic. The Englishman, who was rather drunk and very civil, apologized for this by explaining that he had his own patriotic feelings, but that as it was his lot in life to live by the Boers it was necessary that he should please the Boers. This was, however, the only flag of the Republic which I saw during my journey through the country, and I am inclined to think that our countryman had mistaken the signs of the time. I have however to acknowledge in his favour that he offered to make us a present of some fresh butter.

We passed that night at the house of a Boer, who was represented to me as being a man of wealth and repute in the country and as being peculiarly averse to English rule, —Dutch and republican to his heart's core. And I was told soon after by a party who had travelled over the same road, among whom there were two Dutchmen, that he had been very uncourteous to them. No man could have been more gracious than he was to us, who had come in as strangers upon his hospitality, with all our wants for ourselves our servants and our horses. I am bound to say that his house was very dirty, and the bed of a nature to make the flesh creep, and to force a British occupant of the chamber to wrap himself round with further guards of his own in the shape of rugs and great coats, rather than divest himself of clothes before he would lay himself down. And the copious mess of meat which was prepared for the family supper was not appetising. But nothing could be more grandly courteous than the old man's manner, or kinder than that of his wife. With this there was perhaps something of an air of rank,—

just a touch of a consciousness of superiority,—as there might be with some old Earl at home who in the midst of his pleasant amenities could not quite forget his ancestors. Our host could not speak a word of English,—nor we of Dutch; but an Englishman was in the house,—one of the school-masters of whom I have before spoken,—and thus we were able to converse. Not a word was said about the annexation;—but much as to the farming prospects of the country. He had grown rich and was content with the condition of the land.

He was heartily abused to us afterwards by the party which contained the two Dutchmen as being a Boer by name and a boor by nature, as being a Boer all round and down to the ground. These were not Hollanders from Holland, but Dutchmen lately imported from the Cape Colony;—and as such were infinitely more antagonistic to the real Boer than would be any Englishman out from Europe. To them he was a dirty, ignorant, and arrogant Savage. To him they were presumptuous, new-fangled, vulgar upstarts. They were men of culture and of sense and of high standing in the new country,—but between them and him there were no sympathies.

I think that the English who have now taken the Transvaal will be able, after a while, to rule the Boers and to extort from them that respect without which there can be no comfort between the governors and the governed;—but the work must be done by English and not by Dutch hands. The Dutch Boer will not endure over him either a reforming Hollander from Europe, or a spick-and-span Dutch Afri-

cander from the Cape Colony. The reforming Hollander and the spick-and-span Dutch Africander are very intelligent people. It is not to be supposed that I am denying them any good qualities which are to be found in Englishmen. But the Boer does not love them.

Soon after starting from our aristocratic friend's house one of our horses fell sick. He was the one that kicked,—a bright bay little pony,—and in spite of his kicking had been the favourite of the team. We dined that day about noon at a Boer's house, and there we did all that we knew to relieve the poor brute. We gave him chlorodyne and alum,—in accordance with advice which had been given to us for our behoof along the road,—and when we started we hitched him on behind, and went the last stage for that day with a unicorn team. Then we gave him whisky, but it was of no use. That night he could not feed, and early the next morning he laid himself down when he was brought out of the stable and died at my feet. It was our first great misfortune. Our other three horses were not the better or the brighter for all the work they had done, and would certainly not be able to do what would be required of them without a fourth companion.

The place we were now at is called Wonder Fontein, and is remarkable, not specially for any delightfully springing run of water, but for a huge cave, which is supposed to go some miles underground. We went to visit it just at sunset, and being afraid of returning in the dark, had not time to see all of it that is known. But we climbed down into the hole, and lit our candles and wandered about for a time.

Here and there, in every direction, there were branches and passages running under ground which had hitherto never been explored. The son of the Boer who owned the farm at which we were staying, was with us, and could guide us through certain ways;—but other streets of the place were unknown to him, and, as he assured us, had never yet been visited by man. The place was full of bats, but other animals we saw none. In getting down, the path was narrow, steep, low and disagreeable enough;—but when once we were in the cave we could walk without stooping. At certain periods when the rains had been heavy the caves would become full of water,—and then they would drain themselves when the rains had ceased. It was a hideously ugly place; and most uninteresting were it not that anything not customary interests us to some extent. The caves were very unlike those in the Cango district, which I described in the first volume.

At Wonder Fontein there were six or seven guests besides the very large family with which the Boer and his wife were blessed, and we could not therefore have bedrooms apiece;—nor even beds. I and my young friend had one assigned to us, while the Attorney General of the Colony, who was on circuit and to whom we had given a lift in our cart to relieve him for a couple of days of the tedium of travelling with the Judge and the Sheriff by ox waggon, had a bench assigned to him in a corner of the room. In such circumstances a man lies down, but does not go to bed. We lay down,—and got up at break of day, to see our poor little horse die.

On leaving these farm houses the Boers, if asked, will make a charge for the accommodation afforded, generally demand-

ing about 5s. for the supper, a night's rest, and breakfast if the traveller chooses to wait for it. Others, English and Germans, will take nothing for their hospitality. Both the one and the other expect to be paid for what the horses may consume; and we thought we observed that forage with the English and Germans was dearer than with the Boers,—so that the cost came to much the same with the one as with the other. At the English houses,—or German,—it was possible to go to bed. In a Boer's establishment we did not venture to do more than lie down.

Starting on the following day with our three horses we reached Potchefstroom, which, though not the capital, is the largest town in the Transvaal. The road all along had been of the same nature, and the country nearly of the same kind as that we had seen before reaching Pretoria. Here and there it was stony,—but for the most part capable of cultivation. None of it, however, was cultivated with the exception of small patches round the farm houses. These would be at any rate ten miles distant one from each other, and probably more. The roads are altogether unmade, and the “spruits” or streams are unbridged. But the traffic, though unfrequent, has been sufficient to mark the way and to keep it free from grass. Travelling in wet weather must often be impossible,—and in windy weather very disagreeable. We were most fortunate in avoiding both mud and dust, either of which, to the extent in which they sometimes prevail in the Transvaal, might have made our journey altogether impossible.

At Potchefstroom we found a decent hotel kept by an

Englishman,—at which we could go to bed, though not indulged with the luxury of a room for each of us. The assizes were going on and we found ourselves to be lucky in not being forced to have a third with us. Here our first care was to buy a horse so as once again to complete our team. We felt that if we loudly proclaimed our want, the price of horses in Potchefstroom would be raised at once;—and yet it was difficult to take any step without proclaiming our want. We had only one day to stay in the town, and could not therefore dally with the difficulty as is generally the proper thing to do when horse-flesh is concerned. So we whispered our need into the landlord's ear and he undertook to stand our friend,—acknowledging, however, that a horse in a hurry was of all things the most difficult to be had at Potchefstroom. Nevertheless within two hours of our arrival an entire team of four horses was standing in the hotel yard, from which we were to be allowed to choose one for £30. I had refused to have anything to do with the buying in regard to terms; but consented to select the one which should be bought, if we could agree as to price. When I went forth to make the choice I found that in spite of our secrecy a congregation of horse-fanciers had come to see what was being done. Four leaner, poorer, skinnier brutes I never saw standing together with halters round their necks;—but out of the four I did pick one, guided by the bigness of his leg bones and by the freedom of his pace. Everybody was against me,—our driver preferring a younger horse, and the vendor assuring me that in passing over an old grey animal I was altogether cutting my own throat.

But I was firm, and then left the conclave, desiring my young friend to go into the money question.

The seller at first seemed to think that the price was a thing settled. Had he not told the landlord that we might select one for £30;—and had not the selection been made? He assumed a look of injured innocence as though the astute Briton were endeavouring to get the better of the poor Dutchman most dishonourably. Eventually, however, he consented to accept £23, and the money was paid. Then came the criticism of the bystanders thick and hard upon us. £23 for that brute! Was it true that we had given the man £23 for an animal worth at the most £7 10s.? They had allowed the seller to have his luck while the sale was going on, but could not smother their envy when the money was absolutely in his pocket. However we had our horse, whose capabilities were much better than his appearance, and who stood to us gallantly in some after difficulties in which his co-operation was much needed.

Potchefstroom may probably contain something over 2,000 white inhabitants. In saying this, however, I have nothing but guess work to guide me. It is a town covering a very large area, with streets nearly a mile in length;—but here again there is a great deficiency of houses. In some of those streets a wanderer might fancy himself to be roaming through some remote green lane in England, overshadowed through its whole length by weeping willows. The road way under his feet will be exactly that of a green lane;—here a rut, and there a meandering path worn by children's feet, and grass around him everywhere. Now and again he will come

across a cottage,—hardly more than a cabin,—with half a dozen dirty children at the door. Such are the back streets at Potchefstroom. And here too, as at Pretoria, there are hedges of roses, long rows of crowded rose-bushes round the little houses of the better class. There are spots so picturesque as almost to make the wanderer fancy that it would be pleasant to live in a place so pretty, so retired, and so quiet. But weeping willows and rose hedges would, I fear, after a time become insufficient, and the wanderer who had chosen to sojourn here under the influence of these attractions, might wish himself back in some busier centre of the world's business.

Here also there is a great square in the centre of the town, with the Dutch church in the midst of it,—by no means so ugly as the church at Pretoria. The square is larger and very much more picturesque,—while the sardine boxes and paper shirt-collars, so ubiquitous at the newer town, are less obtrusive. The square when I was there was green, with grass on which horses were grazing, and here and there were stationed the huge waggons of travellers who had “spanned out” their oxen and were resting here under the tent coverings erected on their vehicles. The scene as I saw it would have made an exquisite subject for a Dutch landscape painter, and was especially Dutch in all its details.

At one corner of the square the Judge was holding the Court in a large room next to the Post-office which is kept for that and other public services. The Judge I had met at Pretoria, and had been much struck by his youth. One expects a judge to be reverend with years, but this was

hardly more than a boy judge. He had been brought from the Cape Bar to act as Judge in the Transvaal before the annexation,—when the payment even of a judge's salary must have been a matter of much doubt. But the annexation came speedily and the position of the new^o comer was made sure by British authority. He at any rate must approve the great step taken by Sir Theophilus Shepstone. I was assured when at Pretoria that the Colony generally had every reason to be satisfied with the choice made by the Republic. He will no doubt have assistant Judges and become a Chief Justice before long and may probably live to be the oldest legal pundit under the British Crown. I went into the Court to look at him while at work, but was not much edified as the case then before him was carried on in Dutch. Dutch and English have to be used in the Court as one or the other language may be needed. An interpreter is present, but as all the parties concerned in the case, including the Judge and the jury, were conversant with Dutch, no interpreter was wanted when I was there.

From Potchefstroom to Klerksdorp our horses, including the new purchase, did their work well. Here we found a clean little Inn kept by an Englishman with a very nice English wife,—who regaled us with lamb and mint-sauce and boiled potatoes, and provided clean sheets for our couches. Why such a man, and especially why such a woman, should be at such a place it is difficult to understand. For Klerksdorp is a town consisting perhaps of a dozen houses. The mail cart passes but once a week, and the other traffic on the road is chiefly that of ox-waggons.

On the following day, a Saturday, we travelled 50 miles, and, with our horses very tired, reached a spot across the "Maquasie Spruit," at which a store or shop is kept and where we remained over the Sunday, hospitably entertained by the owners of the establishment. Here we were on land which has been claimed and possessed by the Transvaal Republic; but which was given over to the Batlapin natives by a division generally known in the later-day history of South African affairs as the Keate award. The Batlapins are a branch of the great Bechuana tribe. Mr. Keate in 1871 was Lieut.-Governor of Natal, and undertook, at the instance of the British Government, to make an award between the Transvaal Republic and the Batlapin Kafirs, whose Chief is and was a man called Gassibone. I should hardly interest or instruct my readers by going deeply into the vexed question of the Keate award. To Europeans living in South Africa it is always abominable that anything should be given up or back to the natives, and whatever is surrendered to them in the way of territory is always resumed before long by hook or crook. There is a whole district of the Transvaal Republic,—a county as we should say,—lying outside or beyond the "Maquasie Spruit,"—called Bloomhof, with two towns, Bloomhof and Christiana, each having perhaps a dozen houses,—and this the Transvaal never did surrender. Governor Keate's award was repudiated by the Volksraad of the Transvaal, and a Dutch Landroost,—or magistrate,—who however is an Englishman, was stationed at Christiana and still remains there. This was a matter of no great trouble to us while the Republic stood on its own

legs. Though a Governor of ours had made the award we were not bound to remedy Dutch injustice. But now what are we to do? Are we to give back the country with its British and Dutch inhabitants,—a dozen families at Bloemhof and a dozen more at Christiana,—and the farmers here and there to the dominion of Gassibone and his Batlapins? I think I may say that most certainly we shall do nothing of the kind,—but with what excuse we shall escape the necessity I do not see so clearly. In the meantime there is the Landroost at Christiana,—now paid with British gold, who before the annexation was paid with Transvaal notes worth 5s. to the nominal pound. When I talked to him of Keate's award and of Gassibone's line, he laughed at me. Annexation to British rule with all the beauties of British punctuality was a great deal too good a thing to be sacrificed to a theory of justice in favour of such a poor race of unfighting Kafirs as the Batlapins! I have no doubt that he was right, and that the Transvaal Colony will maintain a Landroost at Christiana as long as Landroosts remain in that part of South Africa.

But the question was a very vital one in that neighbourhood. As I was passing over the Vaal in a punt to the Orange Free State a Boer who had heard my name, and who paid me the undeserved compliment of thinking my opinion on such a matter worth having, consulted me on his peculiar case. After the Keate award, when by the decision then made the portion of territory in question had been adjudged to be the property of Gassibone and his tribe, this Boer had bought land of the Kafirs. The land so pro-

cured had also been distributed by the Transvaal Republican Government to those claiming it under the law as to burghers' rights. The rulers of the Transvaal Republic would not recognise any alienation of land by contract with the Kafirs. Now, upon the annexation, my friend had thought that the Keate award would be the law, and that his purchase from the Kafirs would hold good. There was I, a grey-bearded Englishman of repute, travelling the country. What did I think of it? I could only refer him to the Landroost. The Landroost, he said, was against him. "Then," said I, "you may be sure that the facts will be against you, for the Landroost will have the decision in his hands." He assented to my opinion as though it had come direct from Minos, merely remarking that it was very hard upon him. I did not pity him much because it is probable that he only gave the Kafirs a few head of cattle, and that he bought the land from Kafirs who had no right of selling it away from their tribe. At the "Maquasie Spruit," where we first entered this debateable land, the storekeepers were also anxious to know what was to happen to them; but they were Scotchmen and were no doubt quite clear in their own minds that the entire country would remain British soil.

The next day we reached Bloomhof and on the day following Christiana. This last place we entered anything but triumphantly, two of our horses being so tired that we had to take them off the cart, and walk into the place driving them before us. Two more days would take us to Kimberley according to our appointed time, but these two days would be days of long work. And here we heard for the first time

that there was a long and weary region of sand before us in the portion of the Orange Free State through which we must pass. It was evident to us that we could not do it all with our own horses, and therefore we resolved to hire. This was at first pronounced to be impossible, but the impossibility vanished. Though there were certainly not more than twelve houses in the place one belonged to a man who, oddly enough, had two spare horses out in the veld. He was brought to us, and I shall never forget the look of dismay and bewilderment which came across his countenance when he was told that he must decide at once whether he would allow his horses to be hired. "He must," he said, as he seated himself near a bottle of Cape brandy,—“he must have time to think about it!” When he was again pressed, he groaned and shook himself. The landlord told us that the man was so poor that his children had nothing to eat but mealies. The money no doubt was desirable;—but how could he make up his mind in less than two or three hours to what extent he might so raise his demand as not to frighten away the customers which Providence had sent him, and yet secure the uttermost sum after due chaffering and bargaining? At last words were extracted from him. We should have two horses for sixteen miles, for——well, say, for the incredibly small sum of £2. We hurriedly offered him 30s., and he was at last hustled into the impropriety of agreeing to our terms without taking a night's rest to sleep upon it. He was an agonised man as he assented, having been made to understand that we must then and there make up our minds, whether we would proceed early on the next day or stay for

twenty-four hours to refresh our own stud. The latter alternative would, however, have been destructive to us, as our horses had already eaten up all the forage to be found in Christiana.

At even the next morning two wretched little ponies were brought in from the veld, one of which was lame. All Christiana was standing in the street to watch us. I flicked the lame animal with the driver's long whip to see if he could trot, and then pronounced in his favour. I fear I felt that his lameness would not matter if he could be made to take us as far as "Blignaut's punt" which was now his destination. He was harnessed in, and on we went with the two most infirm of our own team following behind us. We made the stage with great success,—and whatever may have been the future state of that pony he went out of harness apparently a much sounder animal than he went in. From hence, after discussing the matter of Keate's award with the injured Dutchmen, we went on across the arid lands of the Orange Free State to a Boer's house in the wilderness, where we were assured that we should be made welcome for that night. Our horses could hardly take us there;—but they did do it, and we were made welcome. The Boer was very much like the other Boers of the Transvaal,—a burly, handsome, dirty man, with a very large, dirty family, and a dirty house,—but all the manners of the owner of a baronial castle. He also had a private tutor in his family, a Dutchman who had come out to make money, who knew German and English, but who had failed in his career, and had undertaken his present duties at the rate of £12 a month, besides his board and lodging. I have known English gentlemen who have not

paid so highly for their private tutors. This farm was altogether in the wilderness, the land around being a sandy, stony desert, and not a shrub, hardly a blade of grass being visible. But we knew that our host had grown rich as a farmer on it, owning in fee about 12,000 acres.

On the next morning we were up early, but we could not get on without the Boer's assistance. One of our horses was again dying or seemed to be dying. He was a pretty bay pony, the very fellow of the one we had lost at Wonder Fontein. He had not ate his food all night, and when we took him out at five in the morning he would do nothing but fall down in the veld at our feet. He suffered excruciating agonies, groaning and screaming as we looked at him. We gave him all that we had to give,—French brandy and Castor oil. But nothing seemed to serve him. Then there came to us a little Dutchman from a neighbouring waggon who suggested that we should bleed our poor pony in the ear. The little Dutchman was accordingly allowed the use of a penknife, and the animal's ear was slit. From that moment he recovered,—beginning at once to crop what grass there was. I have often known the necessity of bleeding horses for meagrimms or staggers, by cutting the animal on the palate of the mouth. But I had never before heard of operating on a horse's ear; and I think I may say that our pony was suffering, not from meagrimms or from staggers, but from cholic. I leave the fact to veterinary surgeons at home; but our pony, after having almost died and then been bled on the ear, travelled on with us bravely though without much strength to help us.

On this day we did at last reach the Diamond Fields, but our journey was anything but comfortable. It was very hot and the greater part of the road was so heavy with sand that we were forced to leave the cart and walk. The Boer at whose house we had slept, lent us a horse to help us for the first eight miles. Then we came to a little Dutch roadside public house, the owner of which provided us with two horses to help us on to Kimberley,—a distance of 27 miles,—for £2, sending with us a Kafir boy to lead our tired horses and bring back his own. Eight miles on we reached a hut in the wilderness where a Dutchman had made a dam, and he allowed us to water our cattle charging us one and sixpence. From thence on to Kimberley, through the heavy sand, there was not a drop of water. We went very slowly ourselves, trudging on foot after the cart; but the Kafir boy could not keep up with us, and he with the two poor animals remained out in the veld all night. We did reach the town about sunset, and I found myself once again restored to the delights of tubs, telegrams, and bed linen.

Here we parted with our cart, horses, and harness which,—including the price of the animal purchased at Potchefstroom,—had cost us £243,—selling them by auction and realising the respectable sum of £100 by the sale. The auctioneer endeavoured to raise the speculative energy of the bidders by telling them that the horses had all been bred at “Orley Farm” for my own express use, “Orley Farm” being the name of a novel written by me many years ago;—but I do not know that this romance much affected the bidding. We had intended to have taken our

equipage on to Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, which is about 80 miles from Kimberley; but my travelling companion was summoned back to Capetown, and I would not make the journey, or undertake the nuisance of the sale alone. We were of course told that, as things were at present, horses were a mere drug at the Diamond Fields, and that a Cape cart in Kimberley was a thing of no value at all. In my ignorance I would have taken £10 for my share, and therefore when I heard what the auctioneer had done for us I almost felt that my fortune had been made for ever. I certainly think that if the purchaser had seen the team coming into Kimberley he would have hesitated before he made his last bid.

I have endeavoured to give the reader the results so far of my experience of South African travel. As regards money and time no doubt both are to some extent sacrificed by the buying and selling of a private carriage or cart. We had our horses on the road a month.

They cost us about 7s. 6d. a day each for their keep, or . . . £45

The expenses of the Cape boy who drove us amounted to about 15

The cart and horses and harness, as above shown, cost . . . £143

Total . . . £203

which, as we were two, must be divided, making our expense £101 10s. each for about 700 miles. There are public conveyances over the whole road which would carry a passenger with his luggage for about £40. We travelled when on the road 30 miles a day on an average, whereas the public carts make an average of 90. This seems to be all in

favour of the mail carts. And then it has to be acknowledged that the responsibilities and difficulties of a private team are very wearing. Horses in South Africa are peculiarly liable to sickness; and, though they do a very large average of work, seem when tired to be more incapable of getting over the ground than any other horses. The necessity of providing forage,—sometimes where no forage is to be had,—and of carrying large quantities on the cart; the agony of losing a horse, and the nuisance of having to purchase or hire others; the continual fear of being left as it were planted in the mud;—all these things are very harassing, and teach the traveller to think that the simplicity of the Mail Cart is beautiful. If misfortune happen to a public conveyance the passenger is not responsible. He may be left behind, but he always has the satisfaction of demanding from others that he shall be carried on. On our route we encountered two sets of travellers who had been left on the road through the laches of the Cart Contractors; but in both cases the sufferers had the satisfaction of threatening legal proceedings and of demanding damages. When one's own horse dies on the road, or one's own wheel flies off the axle, there is nobody to threaten, and personal loss is added to personal misery. All this seems to be in favour of the simple Mail Cart.

But there is another side to the question which I attempted to describe when I told the tale of those unfortunate wretches who were forced to wander about in the mud and darkness between Newcastle and Pretoria. Such a journey as those gentlemen were compelled to make would in truth kill

a weakly person. Some of these conveyances travel day and night, for four, five, or six consecutive days,—or stop perhaps for three or four hours at some irregular time which can hardly be turned to account for rest. Such journeys if they do not kill are likely to be prejudicial, and for the time are almost agonizing. We with our own cart and horses could get in and out when we pleased, could stop when we liked, and as long as we liked, and encountered no injurious fatigue. In addition to this I must declare that I never enjoyed my meals more thoroughly than I did those which we prepared for ourselves out in the veld. Such comfort, however, must depend altogether on the nature of the companion whom the traveller may have selected for himself. I had been, in this respect, most fortunate. We had harassed minds when our horses became sick or when difficulties arose as to feeding them; but our bodies were not subjected to torment.

These are the pros and the cons, as I found them, and which I now offer for the service of any gentleman about to undertake South African travel. Ladies, who make long journeys in these parts only when their husbands or fathers have selected some new and more distant site for their homes, are generally carried about on ox-waggon, in which they live and sleep and take their meals. They progress about 16, 20, or sometimes 24 miles a day, and find the life wearisome and uncomfortable. But it is sure, and healthy, and when much luggage has to be carried, is comparatively inexpensive.

I had by no means finished my overland travels in South Africa on reaching Kimberley. I had indeed four or five

hundred miles still before me, of which I shall speak as I go on. But I had learned that the coaches to Bloemfontein, and thence down to Grahamstown were more christian in their nature, and more trustworthy than those which had frightened me in the Transvaal. Partly on this account and partly because my friend was deserting me I determined to trust myself to them ;—and therefore have given here this record of my experiences as to a Cape cart and private team of horses.

GRIQUALAND WEST.

CHAPTER VII.

GRIQUALAND WEST—WHY WE TOOK IT.

GRIQUALAND WEST is the proper, or official, name for that part of South Africa which is generally known in England as the Diamond Fields, and which is at the period of my writing,—the latter part of 1877,—a separate Colony belonging to the British Crown, under the jurisdiction of the Governor of the Cape Colony, but in truth governed by a resident administrator. Major Lanyon is now the occupier of the Government House, and is “His Excellency of Griqualand” to all the Queen’s loyal British subjects living in and about the mines. This is the present position of things;—but the British Government has offered to annex the Province to the Cape Colony, and the Cape Colony has at length agreed to accept the charge,—subject to certain conditions as to representation and other details. Those conditions are, I believe, now under consideration, and if they be found acceptable,—as will probably be the case,—the Colonial Office at home being apparently anxious to avoid the expense and trouble of an additional little Colony,—Griqualand West and the Diamond Fields will become a part of the Cape Colony in the course of 1878. The proposed conditions offer but one member for the Legislative

Council, and four for the Assembly, to join twenty-one members in the former house, and sixty-eight in the latter. It is alleged very loudly and perhaps correctly at the Fields that this number is smaller than that to which the District is entitled if it is to be put on the same footing with other portions of the great Colony. It is alleged also that a class of the community which has shewn itself to be singularly energetic should be treated at any rate not worse than its neighbours who have been very much more slow in their movements, and less useful by their industry to the world at large. Whether such remonstrances will avail anything I doubt much. If they do not, I presume that the annexation will almost be immediate.

The history of Griqualand West does not go back to a distant antiquity, but it is one which has given rise to a singularly large amount of controversy and hot feeling, and has been debated at home with more than usual animation and more than usual acerbity. In the course of last year (1877) the "Quarterly" and the "Edinburgh Reviews" warmed themselves in a contest respecting the Hottentot Waterboer and his West Griquas, and the other Hottentot Adam Kok and his East Griquas, till South African sparks were flying which reminded one of the glorious days of Sidney Smith and Wilson Croker. Such writings are anonymous, and though one knows in a certain sense who were the authors, in another sense one is ignorant of anything except that an old-fashioned battle was carried on about Kok and Waterboer in our two highly esteemed and reverend Quarterlies. But as the conduct,

not only of our Colonial Office, but of Great Britain as an administrator of Colonies, was at stake,—as on one side it was stated that an egregious wrong had been done from questionable motives, and on the other that perfect statecraft and perfect wisdom had been combined in the happy manner in which Griqualand West with its diamonds had become British territory, I thought it might be of interest to endeavour to get at the truth when I was on the spot. But I have to own that I have failed in the attempt to find any exact truth or to ascertain what abstract justice would have demanded. In order to get at a semblance of truth and justice in the matter it has to be presumed that a Hottentot Chief has understood the exact nature of a treaty and the power of a treaty with the accuracy of an accomplished European diplomat; and it has to be presumed also that the Hottentot's right to execute a treaty binding his tribe or nation is as well defined and as firmly founded as that of a Minister of a great nation who has the throne of his Sovereign and the constitutional omnipotence of his country's parliament at his back. In our many dealings with native tribes we have repeatedly had to make treaties. These treaties we have endeavoured to define, have endeavoured to explain; but it has always been with the conviction that they can be trusted only to a certain very limited extent.

The question in dispute is whether we did an injustice to the Orange Free State by taking possession of Griqualand West in 1871 when diamonds had already been discovered there and the value of the district had been acknowledged. At that time it was claimed by the Orange Free State whose

subjects had inhabited the land before a diamond had been found, and which had levied taxes on the Boers who had taken up land there as though the country had belonged to the Republic. Since the annexation has been effected by us we have, in a measure, acknowledged the claim of the Free State by agreeing to pay to it a sum of £90,000—as compensation for what injustice we may have done; and we have so far admitted that the Free State has had something to say for itself.

The district in question at a period not very remote was as little valuable perhaps as any land on the earth's surface lying adjacent to British territory. The first mention I find of the Griquas is of their existence as a bastard Hottentot tribe in 1811 when one Adam Kok was their captain. The word Griqua signifies bastard, and Adam Kok was probably half Dutchman and half Hottentot. In 1821 Adam Kok was dismissed or resigned, and Andreas Waterboer was elected in his place. Kok then went eastwards with perhaps half the tribe, and settled himself at a place which the reader will find on the map, under the name of Philipolis, north of the Orange river in the now existing Orange Free State. Then some line of demarcation was made between Waterboer's lands and Kok's lands, which line leaves the Diamond Fields on one side or—on the other. Adam Kok then trekked further eastward with the Griquas of Griqualand East, as they had come to be called, to a territory south of Natal, which had probably been depopulated by the Zulus. This territory was then called No Man's Land, but is now marked on the maps as Adam Kok's Land. But he gave some power of attorney

enabling an agent to sell the lands he left behind him, and under this power his lands were sold to the Orange Free State which had established itself in 1854. The Free State claims to have bought the Diamond Fields,—diamonds having been then unknown,—under this deed. But it is alleged that the deed only empowered the agent to sell the lands in and round Philipolis on which Adam Kok's Griquas had been living. It is certain, however, that Adam Kok had continued to exercise a certain right of sovereignty over the territory in question after his deposition or resignation, and that he made over land to the Boers of the Free State by some deed which the Boers had accepted as giving a good title. It is equally certain that old Waterboer's son had remonstrated against these proceedings and had objected to the coming in of the Boers under Kok's authority.

We will now go back to old Andreas Waterboer, who for a Hottentot seems to have been a remarkably good sort of person, and who as I have said had been chosen chief of the Griquas when Adam Kok went out. In 1834 Sir Benjamin D'Urban, that best and most ill-used of Cape Colony Governors, made a treaty with old Andreas undertaking to recognise him in all his rights, and obtaining a promise from the Hottentot to assist in defending the British border from the hordes of savagery to the north. There was also a clause under which the Hottentot was to receive a stipend of £150 per annum. This treaty seems to have been kept with faith on both sides till Waterboer died in December, 1852. The stipend was punctually paid, and the Hottentot did a considerable quantity of hard fighting on behalf of the British. On

his death his son Nicholas Waterboer came to reign in his stead. Nicholas is a Christian as was his father, and is comparatively civilized;—but he is by no means so good a Christian as was the old man, and his father's old friends were not at first inclined to keep up the acquaintance on the same terms.

Nicholas, no doubt mindful of the annual stipend, asked to have the treaty renewed in his favour. But other complications had arisen. In 1852 Messrs. Hogge and Owen had acted as Commissioners for giving over the Transvaal as a separate Republic and in the deed of transference it was agreed that there should not be any special treaties between the Cape Colony and the Natives north of the Orange river, as it was thought that such treaties would interfere with the independence of the Republic. Poor Nicholas for a time suffered under this arrangement, but in 1858 a letter was written to him saying that all that had been done for his father should be done for him,—and the payment of the £150 per annum was continued though no treaty was made.*

In the mean time, in 1854, the severance had been made of the Orange Free State from the Colony, the bounds of which were not then settled with much precision. Had they been declared to be the Orange and the Vaal rivers in reference to the North, East, and South, the Diamond Fields would have been included,—or the greater part of the Diamond Fields. But that would not have settled the question, as England could not have ceded what she did not possess. Thus there was a corner of land as there have

* I believe he did receive the stipend all through.

been many corners in South Africa, respecting which there was doubts as to ownership. Waterboer alleged that the line which his father and old Adam Kok had made so long ago as 1821,—with what geometrical resources they might then have,—gave him a certain apparently valueless tract of land, and those again who assumed a right to Adam Kok's land, asserted that the line gave it to them. The Kokites, however, had this point in their favour, that they had in some sort occupied the land,—having sold it or granted leases on it to Dutch Boers who paid taxes to the Orange Free State in spite of Waterboer's remonstrances.

But the matter at the time was in truth unimportant. Encroachments were made also into this very district of Griqualand from the other Republic also. In speaking of the Transvaal I have already described the position there to which such encroachments had led. A treaty became necessary to check the Transvaal Boers from establishing themselves on Griqualand, and the Transvaal authorities with the native Chiefs, and our Governor at the Cape, agreed that the matter should be referred to an umpire. Mr. Keate, the Lieut. Governor of Natal, was chosen and the Keate award was made. But the land in question was not valuable; diamonds had not yet been found, and the question was not weighty enough to create determined action. The Transvaal rejected the treaty, and the Transvaal Boers, as well as those from the Free State, continued to occupy land in Griqualand West. Now the land of the Transvaal Republic has come back into our hands, and there is one little difficulty the more to solve.

Then, in 1869, the first diamond was found on a farm possessed by an Orange Free State Boer, and in 1871 Nicholas Waterboer, claiming possession of the land, and making his claim good to British colonial intellects, executed a treaty ceding to the British the whole district of Griqualand West,—a tract of land about half as big as Scotland, containing 17,800 square miles. There had by this time grown up a vast diamond seeking population which was manifestly in want of government. Waterboer himself could certainly do nothing to govern the free, loudspeaking, resolute body of men which had suddenly settled itself upon the territory which he claimed. Though he considered himself to be Captain of the Country, he would have been treated with no more respect than any other Hottentot had he shown himself at the diggings. Yet he no doubt felt that such a piece of luck having turned up on what he considered to be his own soil, he ought to get something out of it. So he made a treaty, ceding the country to Great Britain in 1871. In 1872 his stipend was raised to £250,—in 1873 to £500; and an agreement has now been made, dated I think in October 1877, increasing this to £1,000 a year, with an allowance of £500 to his widow and children after his death. It was upon this deed that we took possession of Griqualand West with all its diamonds; but the Orange Free State at once asserted its claim,—based on present possession and on the purchase of Adam Kok's rights.

I think I shall not be contradicted when I say that amidst such a condition of things it is very hard to determine where is precisely the truth and what perfect abstract justice would

have demanded. I cannot myself feel altogether content with the title to a country which we have bought from a Hottentot for an allowance of £1,000 a year with a pension of £500 to his wife and children. Much less can I assent to the title put forward by the Free State in consequence of their negotiation with Adam Kok's Agent. The excuse for annexation does not in my mind rest on such buyings and sellings. I have always felt that my sense of justice could not be satisfied as to any purchase of territory by civilized from uncivilized people,—first because the idea of the value of the land is essentially different in the minds of the two contracting parties; and secondly because whatever may be the tribal customs of a people as to land I cannot acknowledge the right of a Chieftain to alienate the property of his tribe,—and the less so when the price given takes the form of an annuity for life to one or two individuals.

The real excuse is to be found in that order of things which has often in the affairs of our Colonies made a duty clear to us, though we have been unable to reconcile that duty with abstract justice. When we accepted the cession of the Province in 1871 the Free State was no doubt making an attempt to regulate affairs at the Diamond Fields; but it was but a feeble attempt. The Republic had not at its back the power needed for saying this shall be law, and that shall be law, and for enforcing the laws so enacted. And if the claim of Great Britain to the land was imperfect, so was that of the Free State. The persons most interested in the matter prayed for our interference, and felt that they could live only under our Government. There had no doubt been

occupation after a kind. A few Boers here and there had possessed themselves of the lands, buying them by some shifty means either from the Natives or from those who alleged that they had purchased them from the Natives. And, as I have said, taxes were levied. But I cannot learn that any direct and absolute claim had ever been made to national dominion,—as is made by ourselves and other nations when on a new-found shore we fly our national flags. The Dutch had encroached over the border of the Griquas and then justified their encroachment by their dealings with Adam Kok. We have done much the same and have justified our encroachment by our dealings with Nicholas Waterboer. But history will justify us because it was essentially necessary that an English speaking population of a peculiarly bold and aggressive nature should be made subject to law and order.

The accusation against our Colonial Office of having stolen the Diamond Fields because Diamonds are peculiarly rich and desirable can not hold water for an instant. If that were so in what bosom did the passion rise and how was it to be gratified? A man may have a lust for power as Alexander had, and Napoleon,—a lust to which many a British Minister has in former days been a prey; but, even though we might possibly have a Colonial Secretary at this time so opposed in his ideas to the existing theories and feelings of our statesmen as to be willing to increase his responsibilities by adding new Colonies to our long list of dependencies, I cannot conceive that his ambition should take the shape of annexing an additional digging population. Has

any individual either claimed or received glory by annexing Griqualand West? From the operations of such a Province as the Diamond Fields it is not the mother country that reaps the reward, but the population whether they be English, Dutch, or Americans,—the difficult task of ruling whom the mother country is driven to assume.

It is known to all Englishmen who have watched the course of our colonial history for the last forty years that nothing can be so little pleasant to a Secretary of State for the Colonies as the idea of a new Colony. Though they have accrued to us, one after the other, with terrible rapidity there has always been an attempt made to reject them. The Colonial Secretary has been like an old hen to whose large brood another and another chick is ever being added,—as though her powers of stretching her wings were unlimited. She does stretch them, like a good old mother with her maternal instincts, but with most unwilling efforts, till the bystander thinks that not a feather of protection could be given to another youngling. But another comes and the old hen stretches herself still wider,—most painfully.

New Zealand is now perhaps the pet of our colonial family; and yet what efforts were made when Lord Normanby and afterwards when Lord John Russell were at the Colonies to stave off the necessity of taking possession of the land! But Englishmen had settled themselves in such numbers on her shores that England was forced to send forth the means of governing her own children. The same thing happened, as I have attempted to tell, both in British Kafiraria and Natal. The same thing happened the other

day in the Fiji Islands. The same feeling, acting in an inverse way,—repudiating the chicks instead of taking them in,—induced us to give over the Transvaal and the Orange Free State to Republicanism. Our repudiation of the former has lasted but for a quarter of a century, and there are many now of British race to be found in South Africa who are confident that we shall have to take the Orange Free State in among the brood in about the same period from her birth. British rule in distant parts, much as it is abused, is so precious a blessing that men will have it, and the old hen is forced to stretch her poor old wings again and still again.

This I hold to be the real and unanswerable excuse for what we have done in Griqualand West and not our treaty with Waterboer. As far as right devolving from any treaty goes I think that we have the best of it,—but not so much the best, that even could I recognize those treaties as conveying all they are held to convey, I should declare our title to be complete. But, that such treaties are for the most part powerless when pressure comes, is proved by our own doings and by those of other nations all round the world. We have just annexed the Transvaal,—with the approbation of both sides in the House of Commons. Our excuse is that though the Transvaal was an independent State she was so little able to take care of herself that we were obliged to enter in upon her, as the law does on the estate of a lunatic. But how would it have been, if the Transvaal instead of the Orange Free State had been our competitor for the government of the Diamond Fields? If we can justify ourselves in annexing a whole Republic

surely we should not have scrupled to take the assumed dependency of a Republic. In such doings we have to reconcile ourselves to expedience, however abhorrent such a doctrine may be to us in our own private affairs. Here it was expedient that a large body, chiefly of Englishmen, should, for their own comfort and well being, be brought under rule. If in following out the doctrine any abstract injustice was done, it was not against the Orange Free State, but against the tribes whom no Waterboer and no Adam Kok could in truth be authorized to hand over either to British or to Dutch Republican rule.

For a while I was minded to go closely into the question of Kok v. Waterboer and to put forward what might probably have been a crude expression of the right either of the one Hottentot or of the other to make over at any rate his power and his privileges of government. But I convinced myself, when on the spot, that neither could have much right, and that whatever right either might have, was so far buried in the obscurity of savagery in general, that I could not possibly get at the bottom of it so as to form any valid opinion. Books have been written on the subject, on the one side and on the other, which have not I think been much studied. Were I to write no more than a chapter on it my readers would pass it by. The intelligence of England will not engage itself on unravelling the geographical facts of a line of demarcation made between two Hottentot Chieftains when the land was comparatively valueless, and when such line could only be signified by the names of places, or which the exact position

can hardly even now be ascertained. When subsequently I read the report which the Secretary of State for the Colonies made to the Governor of the Cape Colony on 5 August 1876, informing the Governor of the terms under which he and the President of the Orange Free State had agreed to compromise the matter, I was glad to find that he, in his final discussions with the President, had come to the same conclusion. I here quote the words in which Lord Carnarvon expressed himself to Sir Henry Barkly ;—and I would say that I fully agree with him were it not that such testimony might seem to be impertinent. “At the earlier interviews Mr. Brand repeatedly expressed his desire to submit proof of the claim preferred by his Government to a great part of Griqualand West. I had however determined from the first that there would be no advantage in entering upon such an enquiry. It was obvious that there could be no prospect of our coming to an agreement on a question which teemed with local details and personal contentions.”

The Secretary of State goes on to explain the circumstances under which the £90,000 are to be given. I will confess for myself that I should almost have preferred to have stuck to the territory without paying the money. If it be our “destiny” to rule people I do not think that we ought to pay for assuming an office which we cannot avoid. The Secretary of State in this report strongly reasserts the British right to Griqualand West,—though he acknowledges that he cannot hope by mere eloquence to convince President Brand of that right. “As you think you are wronged,” the Secretary goes on to argue, “we will consent

to compensate the wrong which we feel sure you have not suffered, but which you think you have endured, so that there need be no quarrel between us." Probably it was the easiest way out of the difficulty; but there is something in it to regret. It must of course be understood that the £90,000 will not be paid by the British taxpayer, but will be gathered from the riches of Griqualand West herself.

On the 27 October 1871 the Diamond Fields were declared to be British territory. But such a declaration, even had it not been opposed by the Free State and the friends of the Free State, would by no means have made the course of British rule plain and simple. There have, from that day to this, arisen a series of questions to settle and difficulties to solve which, as they crop up to the enquirer's mind, would seem to have been sufficient to have overcome the patience of any Colonial Secretary even though he had not another Colony on his shoulders. If there was any Colonial sinner, —Secretary, Governor, or subordinate,—who carried away by the lust of empire had sought to gratify his ambition by annexing Griqualand West, he must certainly have repented himself in sackcloth and ashes before this time (the end of 1877) when the vexed question of annexation or non-annexation to the Cape Colony is hardly yet settled. When the territory was first accepted by Great Britain it was done on an understanding that the Cape Colony should take it and rule it, and pay for it,—or make it pay for itself. The Colonial Secretary of the day declared in an official dispatch that he would not consent to the annexation unless, "the

Cape Parliament would personally bind itself to accept the responsibility of governing the territory which was to be united to it, together with the entire maintenance of any force which might be necessary for the preservation of order." It must be presumed therefore that the lust for empire did not exist in Downing Street. The Cape Parliament did so far accede to the stipulation made by the Secretary of State, as to pass a resolution of assent. They would agree,—seeing that British rule could not in any other way be obtained. But an intermediate moment was necessary,—a moment which should admit of the arrangement of terms,—between the absolute act of assumption by Great Britain and the annexation by the Colony. That moment has been much prolonged, and has not yet, as I write, been brought to an end. So that the lust for rule over the richest diamond fields in the world seems hardly to be very strong even in the Colony. Though the Parliament of the Colony had assented to the requisition from Downing Street, it afterwards,—not unnaturally,—declined to take the matter in hand till the Government at home had settled its difficulties with the Orange Free State. The Free State had withdrawn whatever officers it had had on the Fields, and had remonstrated. That difficulty is now solved ;—and the Cape Colony has passed a bill shewing on what terms it will annex the territory. The terms are very unpopular in the district,—as indeed is the idea of annexation to the Cape Colony at all. Griqualand would very much prefer to continue a separate dependency, with a little Council of its own. The intention, however of the mother

country and of the Colony has been too clearly expressed for doubt on that subject. They are both determined that the annexation shall take place, and the Colony will probably be able to dictate the terms.

But there have been other difficulties sufficient almost to break the heart of all concerned. Who did the land belong to on which the diamonds were being found, and what were the rights of the owners either to the stones beneath the surface, or to the use of the surface for the purpose of searching? The most valuable spot in the district, called at first the Colesberg Kopje,—Kopje being little hill,—and now known as the Kimberley mine, had been on a farm called Vooruitzuit belonging to a Dutchman named De Beer. This farm he sold to a firm of Englishmen for the very moderate sum of £6,600,*—a sum however which to him must have appeared enormous,—and the firm soon afterwards sold it to the Government for £100,000. To this purchase the Government was driven by the difficulties of the position. Diggers were digging and paying 10s. a month for their claims to the owners of the soil, justifying themselves in that payment by the original edict of the Free State, while the owners were claiming £10 a month, and asserting their right to do as they pleased with their own property. The diggers declared their purpose of resisting by force any who interfered with them;—and the owners of the soil were probably in league with the diggers,

* The purchasers were in treaty for De Beer's farm at the time when the first diamond was found by a lady's parasol on the little hill where is now the Kimberley mine, and £600 was added to the purchase money in consequence. It is calculated that diamonds to the value of £12,000,000 have since been extracted from the mine.

so as to enhance the difficulties, and force the Government to purchase. The Government was obliged to buy and paid the enormous sum of £100,000 for the farm. Many stories could be told of the almost inextricable complexities which attended the settlement of claims to property while the diggers were arming and drilling and declaring that they would take the law into their own hands if they were interfered with in their industry.

In 1872 the population had become so great,—and, as was natural in such circumstances, so unruly,—that the Governor of the Cape Colony, who is also High Commissioner for all our South African territories, was obliged to recommend that a separate Lieutenant Governor should be appointed, and Mr. Southey who had long held official employment in the Cape Colony was sent to fill the place. Here he remained till 1875, encumbered by hardships of which the difficulty of raising a sufficient revenue to pay the expenses of the place was not the least. Diamonds were being extracted worth many millions, but the diamonds did not come into the pocket of the Government. In such localities the great source of revenue,—that which is generally most available,—is found in the Custom duties levied on the goods consumed by the diggers. But here, though the diggers consumed manfully, the Custom duties levied went elsewhere. Griqualand West possessed no port and could maintain no cordon of officers to prevent goods coming over her borders without taxation. The Cape Colony which has been so slow to annex the land got the chief advantages from the consumption of the Diamond Fields, sharing it, however, with Natal. Mr.

Southey is said to have had but thirty policemen with him to assist in keeping the peace, and was forced to ask for the assistance of troops from the Cape. Troops were at last sent from Capetown,—at an expense of about £20,000 to Griqualand West. During all this time it may easily be conceived that no British aggressor had as yet obtained the fruition of that rich empire for which he is supposed to have lusted when annexing the country.

The Lieutenant Governor with his thirty policemen,—and the sudden influx of about 300 soldiers from the Cape—was found to be too expensive for the capabilities of the place. “In 1875,” says the Colonial Office List for 1877, “the condition of the finances rendered it necessary to reduce the civil establishment, and the office of Lieutenant Governor, as well as that of Secretary to Government, was discontinued, and an administrator appointed.” That administrator has been Major Lanyon who has simply been a Lieutenant Governor with a salary somewhat less than that of his predecessor. That the difficulty of administering the affairs of the Colony have been lessened during his period of office, may in part be due to circumstances and the more settled condition of men’s minds. But with such a task as he has had not to have failed is sufficient claim for praise. There have been no serious outrages since he reached the Fields.

Annexation to the Cape Colony will probably take place. But what will come next? The Province does not want annexation;—but specially wants an adequate, we may say a large share in the constituencies of the joint Colonies. Should annexation be carried out. I sympathise with

Griqualand West in the ~~first~~ feeling. I do not think that the diggers of the Diamond Fields will be satisfied with legislation carried on at Capetown. I do not think that a parliamentary majority at Capetown will know how to manage the diggers. Kimberley is so peculiar a place, and so likely to shew its feeling of offence against the Government if it be offended, that I fear it will be a very thorn in the side of any possible Cape Colony Prime Minister. That Downing Street should wish to make over to the Colony the rich treasure, which we are told has been acquired with so much violence and avarice, I am not surprised,—though such annexation must be prejudicial to that desire for South African Confederation which is now strong in Colonial Office bosoms;—but that the Colony should accept the burden while she already possesses that which generally makes such burdens acceptable,—viz., the Custom duties on the goods consumed by the people,—is to me a marvel. It may be that the Cape Parliament was induced to give its first assent by the strongly expressed wishes of the Secretary of State at home, and that it can hardly now recede from the promise it then made.

But in regard to the share which Griqualand claims in the two legislative Houses of the future combined Colonies I cannot at all wish her to prevail. It may be natural that a community should desire to be largely represented without looking forward to all the circumstances by which such representation may be affected. The population of the Diamond Fields is supposed to consist of about 15,000 whites and 30,000 natives. Of the latter number about 12,000 are

men employed in the mines. The other 18,000 natives who are living on their own lands may be eliminated from our present enquiry. Of the 15,000 white persons we will say that a half are men who would be entitled to vote under the present franchise of the Cape Colony. The number would shew a very large proportion of adult males, but a digging population will always have an excessive population of men. But the 12,000 natives would, with a very small deduction on account of women, all be enabled to claim a right to be registered.

The Cape Colony franchise is given to all men with certain qualifications. One qualification, and that the broadest,—is that a man shall be earning wages at the rate of £25 a year and his diet. And he must either have been born a British subject, or born in a Dutch South African territory taken over by the British Government. The latter clause was inserted no doubt with the intention of saving from exclusion any men then still living who might have been born when the Cape of Good Hope was a Dutch Colony; but in justice must be held to include also those born in the Transvaal when the Transvaal was a Dutch Republic. The meaning is that all shall vote, who are otherwise qualified, who have been born English subjects or have become English subjects by annexation from Dutch rule. The majority of the Kafirs now working at the Diamond Fields have been born in the Transvaal; some indeed at Natal, some few in Zululand which is not English, and some few beyond the Limpopo, on native territory which has never been either Dutch or English. But the

great majority are from the distant parts of the Transvaal;—and, with a Kafir as with a white man who should assert himself to be born an English subject or a Transvaalian, the onus probandi would be with those who objected to, or denied, the claim. Every Kafir about the mines earns at the lowest 10s. a week, or £26 10s. per annum and his diet, and it would be found I think impossible to reject their claim to be registered as voters if their names were brought up on the lists.

There will be those at home who will say,—why should they not vote if they are industrious labourers earning wages at so high a rate? But no white man who has been in South Africa and knows anything of South Africa will say that. A very eminent member of the House of Commons,—a friend of my own whom I respect as a politician as highly as any man of the present day,—gently murmured a complaint in discussing the South African permissive bill as to the statement which had been made by the Secretary of State “that until the civilization of the Natives throughout South Africa had made considerable progress it would be desirable that they should not have direct representation in the Legislative Assembly of the Union;”—that is in the Confederated Union sanctioned by the permissive bill. My friend’s philanthropic feelings were hurt by the idea that the coloured man should be excluded from the franchise. But the suggestion contained in this speech that the Kafir should have a vote is received by Europeans in South Africa simply with a smile. Were it granted and could it be generally used at the will and in accordance with the judgment

of the Kafir himself all Europeans would at once leave the country, and South Africa would again become the prey of the strongest handed among the Natives then existing. That Englishmen should live under a policy devised or depending upon Negroes I believe to be altogether impossible. Nor will such an attempt be made. Let the law say what it will as to suffrage that state of things will be avoided,—if not otherwise, then by force.

It is not that I think that the Kafirs about the Diamond Fields will at once swarm to the poll as soon as the franchise of the Cape Colony shall make it possible for them to do so. That is not the way the evil will shew itself. They will care nothing for the franchise and will not be at the trouble to understand its nature. But certain Europeans will understand it,—politicians not of the first class,—and they will endeavour to use for their own purposes a privilege which will have been thoughtlessly conferred. Such politicians will not improbably secure election by Kafir votes, and will cause to be done exactly that which the most respectable employers of labour in the place will think most prejudicial to the interests of the place. And after a while the Negroes of Griqualand West will learn the powers which they possess as have the Negroes of the Southern American States, and thus there will spring up a contest as to the party in which is to be vested the political power of the district. I do not doubt how the contest would end. The white men would certainly prevail however small might be their numbers, and however great the majority of the Kafirs. But I am sure that no part of South Africa would

willingly subject itself to the possibility of such a condition. I think that the franchise of the Cape Colony has been,—I will not say fixed too low, but arranged injudiciously in regard to the population of the Colony itself;—but I am even more strongly of opinion that that franchise is not at all adapted to the population of the Diamond Fields. Considering the nature of the task it may be doubted whether the country of the diamonds would not be best ruled as a Crown Colony.

At the present moment, pending annexation, the Government is carried on by an administrator with a Council of seven besides himself,—eight in all. Four are appointed and enjoy salaries, while four are elected and are not paid. If necessary for a majority the administrator has two votes. But a quorum of five is necessary of which quorum two must be elected members. The consequence is that unless two of the elected members are staunch to the Government, every thing is liable to be brought to a stand still. One or two elected members take up their hats and walk out;—and all business is at an end for the day. This, to say the least of it, is awkward. The evil would be much remedied, if it were required that in forming the quorum of five one elected member would be sufficient. Out of eight a quorum of four* might be held to suffice of which one might be an elected member.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STORY OF THE DIAMOND FIELDS.

THE first known finding of a diamond in South Africa was as recent as 1867;—so that the entire business which has well nigh deluged the world of luxury with precious stones and has added so many difficulties to the task of British rule in South Africa is only now,—in 1877,—ten years old. Mr. Morton, an American gentleman who lectured on the subject before the American Geographical Society in the early part of 1877 tells us that “Across a mission map of this very tract printed in 1750 is written, ‘Here be Diamonds;’”—that the Natives had long used the diamonds for boring other stones, and that it was their practice to make periodical visits to what are now the Diamond Fields to procure their supply. I have not been fortunate enough to see such a map, nor have I heard the story adequately confirmed, so as to make me believe that any customary search was ever made here for diamonds even by the Natives. I am indeed inclined to doubt the existence of any record of South African diamonds previous to 1867, thinking that Mr. Morton must have been led astray by some unguarded assertion. Such a map would be most interesting if it could be produced.

For, all British and South African purposes,—whether in regard to politics, wealth, or geological enquiry the finding of the diamond in 1867 was the beginning of the affair.

And this diamond was found by accident and could not for a time obtain any credence.* It is first known to have been seen at the house of a Dutch farmer named Jacobs in the northern limits of the Cape Colony, and South of the Orange river. It had probably been brought from the bed of the stream or from the other side of the river. The “other side” would be, in Griqualand West, the land of diamonds. As far as I can learn there is no idea that diamonds have been deposited by nature in the soil of the Cape Colony proper. At Jacobs’ house it was seen in the hands of one of the children by another Boer named Van Niekerk, who observing that it was brighter and also heavier than other stones, and thinking it to be too valuable for a plaything offered to buy it. But the child’s mother would not sell such a trifle and gave it to Van Niekerk. From Van Niekerk it was passed on to one O’Reilly who seems to have been the first to imagine it to be a diamond. He took it to Capetown where he could get no faith for his stone, and thence back to Colesberg on the northern extremity of the Colony where it was again encountered with ridicule. But it became matter of discussion and was at last sent to Dr. Atherstone of Grahams-town who was known to be a geologist and a man of science. He surprised the world of South Africa by declaring the stone to be an undoubted diamond. It weighed over 21

carats and was sold to Sir P. Wodehouse, the then Governor of the Colony, for £500.*

In 1868 and 1869 various diamonds were found, and the search for them was no doubt instigated by Van Niekerk's and O'Reilly's success;—but nothing great was done nor did the belief prevail that South Africa was a country richer in precious stones than any other region yet discovered. Those which were brought to the light during these two years may I believe yet be numbered, and no general belief had been created. But some searching by individuals was continued. The same Van Niekerk who had received the first diamond from the child not unnaturally had his imagination fired by his success. Either in 1868 or 1869 he heard of a large stone which was then in the hands of a Kafir witch-doctor from whom he succeeded in buying it, giving for it as the story goes all his sheep and all his horses. But the purchase was a good one,—for a Dutchman's flocks are not often very numerous or very valuable,—and he sold the diamond to merchants in the neighbourhood for £11,200. It weighed 83 carats, and is said to be perfect in all its appointments as to water, shape, and whiteness. It became known among diamonds and was christened the Star of South Africa. After a law suit, during which an interdict was pronounced forbidding its exportation or sale, it made its way to the establishment of Messrs. Hunt and Rosskill

* I find the story told with slight variation by different persons. I have taken the version published in the second edition of Messrs. Silver's *Hand-book*, having found ample reason to trust the accuracy of that compilation. See p. 378 of that volume.

from whom it was purchased for the delight of a lovely British Countess.

Even then the question whether this part of South Africa was diamondiferous * had not been settled to the satisfaction of persons who concern themselves in the produce and distribution of diamonds. There seems to have been almost an Anti-South African party in the diamond market, as though it was too much to expect that from a spot so insignificant as this corner of the Orange and Vaal rivers should be found a rival to the time-honoured glories of Brazil and India. It was too good to believe,—or to some perhaps too bad,—that there should suddenly come a plethora of diamonds from among the Hottentots.

It was in 1870 that the question seems to have got itself so settled that some portion of the speculative energy of the world was enabled to fix itself on the new Diamond Fields. In that year various white men set themselves seriously to work in searching the banks of the Vaal up and down between Hebron and Klipdrift,—or Barkly as it is now called, and many small parcels of stones were bought from Natives who had been instigated to search by what they had already heard. The operations of those times are now called the “river diggings” in distinction to the “dry diggings,” which are works of much greater magnitude carried on in a much more scientific manner away from the river,—and which certainly are in all respects “dry” enough. But at

* This is an abominable word, coined as I believe for the use of the British Diamond Fields;—but it has become so common that it would be affectation to avoid the use of it.

first the searchers confined themselves chiefly to the river bed and to the small confluent of the river, scraping up into their mining cradles the shingles and dirt they had collected, and shaking and washing away the grit and mud, till they could see by turning the remaining stones over with a bit of slate on a board whether Fortune had sent on that morning a peculiar sparkle among the lot.

I was taken up to Barkly "on a picnic" as people say; and a very nice picnic it was,—one of the pleasantest days I had in South Africa. The object was to shew me the Vaal river, and the little town which had been the capital of the diamond country before the grand discovery at Colesberg Kopje had made the town of Kimberley. There is nothing peculiar about Barkly as a South African town, except that it is already half deserted. There may be perhaps a score of houses there most of which are much better built than those at Kimberley. They are made of rough stone, or of mud and whitewash; and, if I do not mistake, one of them had two storeys. There was an hotel,—quite full although the place is deserted,—and clustering round it were six or seven idle gentlemen all of whom were or had been connected with diamonds. I am often struck by the amount of idleness which persons can allow themselves whose occupations have diverged from the common work of the world.

When at Barkly we got ourselves and our provisions into a boat so that we might have our picnic properly, under the trees at the other side of the river,—for opposite to Barkly is

to be found the luxury of trees. As we were rowed down the river we saw a white man with two Kafirs poking about his stones and gravel on a miner's rickety table under a little tent on the beach. He was a digger who had still clung to the "river" business; a Frenchman who had come to try his luck there a few days since. On the Monday previous,—we were told,—he had found a 13 carat white stone without a flaw. This would be enough perhaps to keep him going and almost to satisfy him for a month: Had he missed that one stone he would probably have left the place after a week. Now he would go on through days and days without finding another sparkle. I can conceive no occupation on earth more dreary,—hardly any more demoralizing than this of perpetually turning over dirt in quest of a peculiar little stone which may turn up once a week or may not. I could not but think, as I watched the man, of the comparative nobility of the work of a shoemaker who by every pull at his thread is helping to keep some person's foot dry.

After our dinner we walked along the bank and found another "river" digger, though this man's claim might perhaps be removed a couple of hundred yards from the water. He was an Englishman and we stood awhile and talked to him. He had one Kafir with him to whom he paid 7s. a week and his food, and he too had found one or two stones which he shewed us,—just enough to make the place tenable. He had got upon an old digging which he was clearing out lower. He had, however, in one place reached the hard stone at the bottom, in, or below, which

there could be no diamonds. There was however a certain quantity of diamondiferous matter left, and as he had already found stones he thought that it might pay him to work through the remainder. He was a most good-humoured well-mannered man, with a pleasant fund of humour. When I asked him of his fortune generally at the diggings, he told us among other things that he had broken his shoulder bone at the diggings, which he displayed to us in order that we might see how badly the surgeon had used him. He had no pain to complain of,—or weakness; but his shoulder had not been made beautiful. “And who did it?” said the gentleman who was our Amphytrion at the picnic and is himself one of the leading practitioners of the Fields. “I think it was one Dr. —,” said the digger, naming our friend whom no doubt he knew. I need not say that the doctor loudly disclaimed ever having had previous acquaintance with the shoulder.

The Kafir was washing the dirt in a rough cradle, separating the stones from the dust, and the owner, as each sieve-full was brought to him, threw out the stones on his table and sorted them through with the eternal bit of slate or iron formed into the shape of a trowel. For the chance of a sieve-full one of our party offered him half a crown,—which he took. I was glad to see it all inspected without a diamond, as had there been anything good the poor fellow's disappointment must have been great. That halfcrown was probably all that he would earn during the week,—all that he would earn perhaps for a month. Then there might come three or four stones in one day. I should think that the tedious

despair of the vacant days could hardly be compensated by the triumph of the lucky minute. These "river" diggers have this in their favour,—that the stones found near the river are more likely to be white and pure than those which are extracted from the mines. The Vaal itself in the neighbourhood of Barkly is pretty,—with rocks in its bed and islands and trees on its banks. But the country around, and from thence to Kimberley, which is twenty-four miles distant, is as ugly as flatness barrenness and sand together can make the face of the earth.

The commencement of diamond-digging as a settled industry was in 1872. It was then that dry-digging was commenced, which consists of the regulated removal of ground found to be diamondiferous and of the washing and examination of every fraction of the soil. The district which we as yet know to be so specially gifted extends up and down the Vaal river from the confluence of the Modder to Hebron, about 75 miles, and includes a small district on the east side of the river. Here, within 12 miles of the river, and within a circle of which the diameter is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, are contained all the mines,—or dry diggings,—from which have come the real wealth of the country. I should have said that the most precious diamond yet produced, one of 288 carats, was found close to the river about 12 miles from Barkly. This prize was made in 1872.

It is of the dry diggings that the future student of the Diamond Fields of South Africa will have to take chief account. The river diggings were only the prospecting work which led up to the real mining operations,—as the washing

of the gullies in Australia led to the crushing of quartz and to the sinking of deep mines in search of alluvial gold. Of these dry diggings there are now four, Du Toit's Pan, Bultfontein, Old De Beers,—and Colesberg Kopje or the great Kimberley mine, which though last in the Field has thrown all the other diamond mines of the world into the shade. The first working at the three first of these was so nearly simultaneous, that they may almost be said to have been commenced at once. I believe however that they were in fact opened in the order I have given.

Bultfontein and Du Toit's Pan were on two separate Boer farms, of which the former was bought the first,—as early as 1869,—by a firm who had even then had dealings in diamonds and who no doubt purchased the land with reference to diamonds. Here some few stones were picked from the surface, but the affair was not thought to be hopeful. The diamond searchers still believed that the river was the place. But the Dutch farmer at Du Toit's Pan, one Van Wyk, finding that precious stones were found on his neighbour's land, let out mining licences on his own land, binding the miners to give him one fourth of the value of what they found. This however did not answer and the miners resolved to pay some small monthly sum for a licence, or to "jump" the two farms altogether. Now "jumping" in South African language means open stealing. A man "jumps" a thing when he takes what does not belong to him with a tacit declaration that might makes right. Appeal was then made to the authorities of the Orange Free State for protection ;—and something was done. But the diggers

were too strong, and the proprietors of the farms were obliged to throw open their lands to the miners on the terms which the men dictated.

The English came,—at the end of 1871,—just as the system of dry digging had formed itself at these two mines, and from that time to this Du Toit's Pan and Bultfontein have been worked as regular diamond mines. I did not find them especially interesting to a visitor. Each of them is about two miles distant from Kimberley town, and the centre of the one can hardly be more than a mile distant from the centre of the other. They are under the inspection of the same Government officer, and might be supposed to be part of one and the same enterprise were it not that there is a Mining Board at Du Toit's Pan, whereas the shareholders at Bultfontein have abstained from troubling themselves with such an apparatus. They trust the adjustment of any disputes which may arise to the discretion of the Government Inspector.

At each place there is a little village, very melancholy to look at, consisting of hotels or drinking bars, and the small shops of the diamond dealers. Everything is made of corrugated iron and the whole is very mean to the eye. There had been no rain for some months when I was there, and as I rode into Du Toit's Pan the thermometer shewed over 90 in the shade, and over 150 in the sun. While I was at Kimberley it rose to 96 and 161. There is not a blade of grass in the place, and I seemed to breathe dust rather than air. At both these places there seemed to be a "mighty maze,"—in which they differ altogether from the Kimberley

mine which I will attempt to describe presently. Out of the dry dusty ground, which looked so parched and ugly that one was driven to think that it had never yet rained in those parts, were dug in all directions pits and walls and roadways, from which and by means of which the dry dusty soil is taken out to some place where it is washed and the debris examined. Carts are going hither and thither, each with a couple of horses, and Kafirs above and below,—not very much above or very much below,—are working for 10s. a week and their diet without any feature of interest. What is done at Du Toit's Pan is again done at Bultfontein.

At Du Toit's Pan there are 1441 mining claims which are possessed by 214 claimholders. The area within the reef,—that is within the wall of rocky and earthy matter containing the diamondiferous soil,—is 31 acres. This gives a revenue to the Griqualand Government of something over £2,000 for every three months. In the current year,—1877,—it will amount to nearly £9,000. About 1,700 Kafirs are employed in the mine and on the stuff taken out of it at wages of 10s. a week and their diet,—which, at the exceptionally high price of provisions prevailing when I was in the country, costs about 10s. a week more. The wages paid to white men can hardly be estimated as they are only employed in what I may call superintending work. They may perhaps be given as ranging from £3 to £6 a week. The interesting feature in the labour question is the Kafir. This black man, whose body is only partially and most grotesquely clad, and who is what we mean when we speak of a Savage, earns more than the average rural labourer in

England. Over and beyond his board and lodging he carries away with him every Saturday night 10s. a week in hard money, with which he has nothing to do but to amuse himself if it so pleases him.

At Bultfontein there are 1,026 claims belonging to 153 claimholders. The area producing diamonds is 22 acres. The revenue derived is £6,000 a year, more or less. About 1,300 Kafirs are employed under circumstances as given above. The two diggings have been and still are successful, though they have never reached the honour and glory and wealth and grandeur achieved by that most remarkable spot on the earth's surface called the Colesberg Kopje, the New Rush, or the Kimberley mine.

I did not myself make any special visit to the Old De Beer mine. De Beer was the farmer who possessed the lands called Vooruitzuit of the purchase of which I have already spoken, and he himself, with his sons, for awhile occupied himself in the business;—but he soon found it expedient to sell his land,—the Old De Beer mine being then established. As the sale was progressing a lady on the top of a little hill called the Colesberg Kopje poked up a diamond with her parasol. Dr. Atherstone who had visited the locality had previously said that if new diamond-ground were found it would probably be on this spot. In September 1872 the territory of Griqualand West became a British Colony, and at that time miners from the whole district were congregating themselves at the hill, and that which was at once called the “New Rush” was established. In Australia where gold was found here or there the miners would hurry

off to the spot and the place would be called this or that "Rush."

The New Rush, the Colesberg Kopje,—pronounced Coppy,—and the Kimberley mine are one and the same place. It is now within the town of Kimberley,—which has in fact got itself built around the hill to supply the wants of the mining population. Kimberley has in this way become the capital and seat of Government for the Province. As the mine is one of the most remarkable spots on the face of the earth I will endeavour to explain it with some minuteness, and I will annex a plan of it which as I go on I will endeavour also to explain.

The Colesberg hill is in fact hardly a hill at all,—what little summit may once have entitled it to the name having been cut off. On reaching the spot by one of the streets from the square you see no hill but are called upon to rise over a mound, which is circular and looks to be no more than the debris of the mine though it is in fact the remainder of the slight natural ascent. It is but a few feet high and on getting to the top you look down into a huge hole. This is the Kimberley mine. You immediately feel that it is the largest and most complete hole ever made by human agency.

At Du Toit's Pan and Bultfontein the works are scattered. Here everything is so gathered together and collected that it is not at first easy to understand that the hole should contain the operations of a large number of separate speculators. It is so completely one that you are driven at first to think that it must be the property of one firm,—or at any

rate be entrusted to the management of one director. It is very far from being so. In the pit beneath your feet, hard as it is at first to your imagination to separate it into various enterprises, the persons making or marring their fortunes have as little connection with each other as have the different banking firms in Lombard Street. There too the neighbourhood is very close, and common precautions have to be taken as to roadway, fires, and general convenience.

You are told that the pit has a surface area of 9 acres;—but for your purposes as you will care little for diamondiferous or non-diamondiferous soil, the aperture really occupies 12 acres. The slope of the reef around the diamond soil has forced itself back over an increased surface as the mine has become deeper. The diamond claims cover 9 acres.

You stand upon the marge and there, suddenly, beneath your feet lies the entirety of the Kimberley mine, so open, so manifest, and so uncovered that if your eyes were good enough you might examine the separate operations of each of the three or four thousand human beings who are at work there. It looks to be so steep down that there can be no way to the bottom other than the aerial contrivances which I will presently endeavour to explain. It is as though you were looking into a vast bowl, the sides of which are smooth as should be the sides of a bowl, while round the bottom are various marvellous incrustations among which ants are working with all the usual energy of the ant-tribe. And these incrustations are not simply at the bottom, but come up the curves and slopes of the bowl irregularly,—half-way up perhaps in one place, while on another side they are confined

quite to the lower deep. The pit is 230 feet deep, nearly circular, though after awhile the eye becomes aware of the fact that it is oblong. At the top the diameter is about 300 yards of which 250 cover what is technically called "blue,"—meaning diamondiferous soil. Near the surface and for some way down, the sides are light brown, and as blue is the recognised diamond colour you will at first suppose that no diamonds were found near the surface;—but the light brown has been in all respects the same as the blue, the colour of the soil to a certain depth having been affected by a mixture of iron. Below this everything is blue, all the constructions in the pit having been made out of some blue matter which at first sight would seem to have been carried down for the purpose. But there are other colours on the wall which give a peculiar picturesqueness to the mines. The top edge as you look at it with your back to the setting sun is red with the gravel of the upper reef, while below, in places, the beating of rain and running of water has produced peculiar hues, all of which are a delight to the eye.

As you stand at the edge you will find large high-raised boxes at your right hand and at your left, and you will see all round the margin crowds of such erections, each box being as big as a little house and higher than most of the houses in Kimberley. These are the first recipients for the stuff that is brought up out of the mine. And behind these, so that you will often find that you have walked between them, are the whims by means of which the stuff is raised, each whim being worked by two horses. Originally the operation was done by hand-windlasses which were turned by Kafirs,—and

the practice is continued at some of the smaller enterprises ;—but the horse whims are now so general that there is a world of them round the claim. The stuff is raised on aerial tramways,—and the method of an aerial tramway is as follows. Wires are stretched taught from the wooden boxes slanting down to the claims at the bottom,—never less than four wires for each box, two for the ascending and two for the descending bucket. As one bucket runs down empty on one set of wires, another comes up full on the other set. The ascending bucket is of course full of “blue.” The buckets were at first simply leathern bags. Now they have increased in size and importance of construction,—to half barrels and so upwards to large iron cylinders which sit easily upon wheels running in the wires as they ascend and descend and bring up their loads, half a cart load at each journey.

As this is going on round the entire circle it follows that there are wires starting everywhere from the rim and converging to a centre at the bottom, on which the buckets are always scudding through the air. They drop down and creep up not altogether noiselessly but with a gentle trembling sound which mixes itself pleasantly with the murmur from the voices below. And the wires seem to be the strings of some wonderful harp,—aerial or perhaps infernal,—from which the beholder expects that a louder twang will soon be heard. The wires are there always of course, but by some lights they are hardly visible. The mine is seen best in the afternoon and the visitor looking at it should stand with his back to the setting sun ;—but as he so stands and so looks he will hardly

be aware that there is a wire at all if his visit be made, say on a Saturday afternoon, when the works are stopped and the mine is mute.

When the world below is busy there are about 3,500 Kafirs at work,—some small proportion upon the reef which has to be got into order so that it shall neither tumble in, nor impede the work, nor overlay the diamondiferous soil as it still does in some places; but by far the greater number are employed in digging. Their task is to pick up the earth and shovel it into the buckets and iron receptacles. Much of it is loosened for them by blasting which is done after the Kafirs have left the mine at 6 o'clock. You look down and see the swarm of black ants busy at every hole and corner with their picks moving and shovelling the loose blue soil.

But the most peculiar phase of the mine, as you gaze into its one large pit, is the subdivision into claims and portions. Could a person see the sight without having heard any word of explanation it would be impossible, I think, to conceive the meaning of all those straight cut narrow dikes, of those mud walls all at right angles to each other, of those square separate pits, and again of those square upstanding blocks, looking like houses without doors or windows. You can see that nothing on earth was ever less level than the bottom of the bowl,—and that the black ants in traversing it, as they are always doing, go up and down almost at every step, jumping here on to a narrow wall and skipping there across a deep dividing channel as though some diabolically ingenious architect had contrived a house with 500 rooms, not one of which should be on the same floor, and to and from none of

which should there be a pair of stairs or a door or a window. In addition to this it must be imagined that the architect had omitted the roof in order that the wires of the harp above described might be brought into every chamber. The house has then been furnished with picks, shovels, planks, and a few barrels, populated with its black legions, and there it is for you to look at.

At first the bottom of the bowl seems small. You know the size of it as you look,—and that it is nine acres, enough to make a moderate field,—but it looks like no more than a bowl. Gradually it becomes enormously large as your eye dwells for a while on the energetic business going on in one part, and then travels away over an infinity of subdivided claims to the work in some other portion. It seems at last to be growing under you and that soon there will be no limit to the variety of partitions on which you have to look. You will of course be anxious to descend and if you be no better than a man there is nothing to prevent you. Should you be a lady I would advise you to stay where you are. The work of going up and down is hard, everything is dirty, and the place below is not nearly so interesting as it is above. One firm at the mine, Messrs. Baring Gould, Atkins, & Co. have gone to the expense of sinking a perpendicular shaft with a tunnel below from the shaft to the mine,—so as to avoid the use of the aerial tramway; and by Mr. Gould's kindness I descended through his shaft. Nevertheless there was some trouble in getting into the mine and when I was there the labour of clambering about from one chamber to another in that marvellously broken house was considerable

